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Viagra may pose risks to older men who are apparently healthy and not just to those with heart problems, researchers report today. Page 5

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Spaniards and Basques reacted with joy yesterday to the Eta terrorist group's declaration of a permanent truce after 30 years of bloodshed. Page 16

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## City set for busy new year

New year in the City is usually a very quiet affair, but 1 January 1999 could be one of the busiest ever. Thousands of staff have been coaxed, bribed and bullied into working over the so-called "conversion weekend" when Europe's common currency, the euro, will be officially launched. Page 20

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## Rose qualifies for Tour school

Golfer Justin Rose shot a round of 67 at Chart Hills in Kent to qualify for the European Tour school in Spain in November. Page 27

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Ben Smith and Afab Habib put on an unbeaten partnership of 247 to keep Leicestershire on course for cricket's County Championship. Page 30

## FRIDAY REVIEW

22-PAGE BROADSHEET SECTION

## Andrew Lyne

'Scientifically the possibility of extraterrestrial life cannot be discounted and, perhaps more than any other time in history, the subject can rightly be regarded as a respectable discipline.' Page 4

## Gordon Brown

'I believe that the essential answer to the problems of the moment is not less globalisation - not new national structures to separate and isolate economies - but stronger international structures to make globalisation work in harder times as well as easy ones.' Page 4

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Cryptic crossword, section one, page 32



Recycled paper made up 46.03% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1997

## Tory leaders agree pact to 'get Clarke'

THE TORY high command decided yesterday to mount a concerted attack on the former Chancellor Kenneth Clarke to destroy his campaign against William Hague over Britain's entry to the single currency.

The decision to target Mr Clarke was taken at the Tory Party Central Office in Smith Square with Mr Hague's full approval. Those who were party to the "get Ken" pact included Sir Norman Fowler, who acted as his party leadership campaign manager.

Others who were at the private meeting at Tory party headquarters included Peter Lilley, the deputy leader, Lord Parkinson, the outgoing party chairman, Michael Ancram, his successor, and shadow Chancellor Francis Maude.

Mr Clarke enraged the Tory leadership by dismissing the party ballot called by Mr Hague on the euro in a statement on Wednesday. According to one highly placed source, they decided that "enough is enough".

"They are not going to take this any more. It was not a meeting of right-wing ideologues. It was a broad spectrum of the party," said a

BY COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

leadership source. Lord Parkinson, a former friend of Mr Clarke, fired the first salvo at the launch of the Tory party conference agenda, attacking the former Chancellor for being "arrogant" in dismissing the views of the party in the referendum, which is expected to deliver overwhelming support for Mr Hague's policy of ruling out entry to the euro for at least eight years.

The attack was stepped up last night by Lord Lamont, Mr Clarke's predecessor as Chancellor. Lord Lamont, an outspoken Eurosceptic, was authorised by the party leadership to make his own attack on Mr Clarke, Michael Heseltine, and other pro-Europeans who discount the ballot.

"They have nothing but contempt for Conservative Party members. No matter that more than 150,000 people will vote in this ballot, their opinions are to be an irrelevance. What sort of attitude is this on the most important issue of our time?"

The attacks were reinforced by Michael Howard, the Shadow

Foreign Secretary, and the former Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind. Mr Howard said: "Those who believe our members shouldn't have a say are rooted in the past."

The results of the ballot are due to be announced on the eve of the Tory conference and leaders are determined to use it to try to end the running sore over Europe in the party.

Lord Parkinson said anyone speaking against Mr Hague's policy after the ballot would be speaking for themselves, and not the party - with the clear signal that associations should select candidates who back the leadership line.

The conference is expected to show its overwhelming backing for Mr Hague's Eurosceptic policy on the single currency. Mr Clarke and Mr Heseltine are preparing to attack Mr Hague's policy at a series of fringe meetings during the Bournemouth conference.

By portraying Mr Clarke and Mr Heseltine as "yesterday's men", Mr Hague and his supporters are hoping they can stop Europe sabotaging the Tory election strategy as it did in the 1997 election.



Gail Hek wearing yesterday the official tartan which she has designed for the new Scottish Parliament  
David Moor

## BRITAIN TODAY



## FORECAST

General situation: Early rain in Scotland then sunny spells, and only a few showers in the north-west. Mildly dry in Northern Ireland with warm spots of sunshine. Northern and south-west England and Wales will start with a little rain but soon brighten with sunny spells. Central and southern England will become mainly cloudy with a little drizzle later.

East 5 & SE England, London, E Anglia: A lot of cloud. A light south-west wind. Max temp 19-21°C (66-70°F).

E England, E Midlands: A little afternoon rain. A light south-westerly wind. Max temp 19-21°C (66-70°F).

W Midlands, SW England: Dull and drizzly, brighter later. A light mainly south-west wind. Max temp 17-20°C (63-68°F).

Channel Is: Fog and drizzle. A light south-west wind. Max temp 18-20°C (64-68°F).

West 4 & NE England: Some rain then warm sunshine. A light west to south-west wind. Max temp 18-21°C (64-70°F).

W England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man, W Wales: Rain then plenty of sun. A light mainly westerly wind. Max temp 17-20°C (63-68°F).

N Ireland: Mainly dry with sunny spells. A light south-west wind. Max temp 18-19°C (64-66°F).

SW, SE & NE Scotland, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen: Early rain then warm sunshine. A moderate southerly wind becoming light westerly. Max temp 17-19°C (63-66°F).

N Wales: Rain clearing late afternoon. A fresh southerly wind. Max temp 13-15°C (55-59°F).

## OUTLOOK

Most parts dry and warm on Saturday and Sunday, although southern and western coasts are at risk of fog, especially in south-west England and southern and western Wales. Northern Ireland will be cloudy on Saturday but sunny on Sunday.

## TRAVEL

Roads: West Midlands: M5 between J5 (8 turn west) and J2 (Dudley). Resurfacing work with narrow lanes both ways. Until 12th October.  
West Yorkshire: M1 between J43 Stourton and J42 (Leithouse Interchange) (M20). Roadworks with 50mph speed limit. Until 1st November.  
Buckinghamshire: M40 between Junctions 1a (M25) & 3 Wycombe East. Three narrow lanes both ways and a 50 mph speed limit in force. Until 1st January 1999.  
Berkshire: M4 Between J90 Maidenhead

and J7 Slough. New road layout with a 50mph speed limit in a new half-mile cutting during food relief work. Until 30th November.  
Bristol: M5 J18-19. Major Roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge. Until 1st January 2001.  
Suffolk: A14. Various restrictions in place. Until 31st December 1999.  
A14 Roadworks: Call 0336 460177 for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

## LIGHTING UP

	2.35pm	7.01am
Belfast	7.16pm	6.48am
Birmingham	7.19pm	6.51am
Glasgow	7.27pm	6.55am
London	7.09pm	6.41am
Manchester	7.19pm	6.49am
Newcastle	7.16pm	6.46am

## HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
Astonmoor	6.33	12.1	6.54	12.6
Cardiff	4.50	4.2	5.14	4.3
Devonport	5.16	5.0	5.33	5.3
Dover	10.30	6.2	10.57	6.2
East Langstone	11.14	3.8	11.29	4.2
Falmouth	6.47	4.6	5.04	5.1
Gosport	12.19	3.2	12.17	3.4
Harwich	11.12	3.8	17.41	3.9
Hawthorn	10.02	5.1	10.12	5.4
Hull (Albert Dk)	5.38	8.0	6.11	8.0
Kings Lynn	5.42	6.1	6.22	6.2
Lark	1.51	5.2	2.21	5.2
Lowestoft	10.44	8.7	11.29	8.0
Milford Haven	5.36	6.2	5.57	6.5
Newquay	4.30	6.2	4.51	6.5
Portsmouth	10.51	4.4	17.00	4.4
Swansea	7.36	4.3	7.55	4.6
Wexham	5.24	5.4	5.54	5.4
Witch	10.54	3.2	11.05	3.4

Height measured in metres

## AIR QUALITY

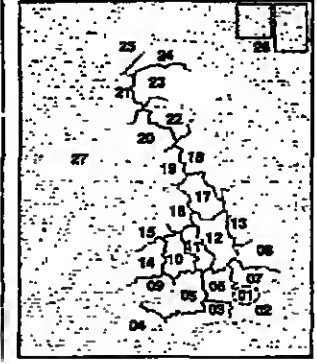
	NO <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
London	Moderate	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

## SUN &amp; MOON

Sun rises: 06.40  
Sun sets: 19.09  
Moon rises: 04.02  
Moon sets: 18.25  
New moon: Sept 20th

## WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecasts dial 0881 3000 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met. Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).



## YESTERDAY

	See	Bar	Max	Min
Worcester: Jersey 20C (68F)	2.1	0.04	13	55
Coldest (day): Tomlin 11C (52F)	3.1	0.01	13	55
Worstcase: Alnham 0.29 in	3.1	0.01	13	55
Summest: Isle of Wight 9.0 hrs	3.1	0.01	13	55
For 24hrs to 2pm Thursday	3.1	0.01	13	55

## EXTREMES

	See	Bar	Max	Min
Abbeville	3.8	0.01	13	55
Angoulême	3.8	0.01	13	55
Antenne	3.2	0.29	13	55
Belfast	3.1	0.01	13	55
Birmingham	6.5	0.06	15	59
Bournemouth	10.7	0	19	66
Bristol	9.0	0.01	18	64
Burnley	3.5	0.15	11	52
Cardiff	5.0	0.01	17	63
Claughton	4.5	0.01	15	61
Croston	7.7	0	16	61
Dundee	5.8	0.01	17	63
Edinburgh	5.8	0.01	17	63
Exeter	5.8	0.01	17	63
Falmouth	5.8	0.01	17	63
Glasgow	5.8	0.01	17	63
Harwich	5.8	0.01	17	63
Hawthorn	5.8	0.01	17	63
Hull (Albert Dk)	5.8	0.01	17	63
Kings Lynn	5.8	0.01	17	63
Lark	5.8	0.01	17	63
Lowestoft	5.8	0.01	17	63
Milford Haven	5.8	0.01	17	63
Newquay	5.8	0.01	17	63
Portsmouth	5.8	0.01	17	63
Swansea	5.8	0.01	17	63
Wexham	5.8	0.01	17	63
Witch	5.8	0.01	17	63

## THE WORLD

Low A will move slowly north-east and begin to fill. High A will drift north and intensify. High B will decline.

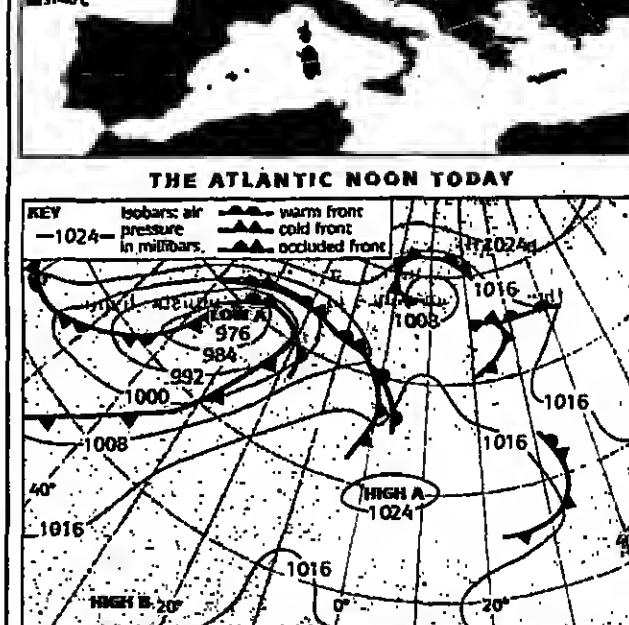
## RAIN OR SHINE

THE PLAGUE, the Irish potato famine and the French Revolution are among some of the historical events for which El Niño, the weather pattern which has spread meteorological havoc around the world this year, is to take the blame. Unrest, disease and crop failure caused by the bad weather was a contributory factor in a number of historical events according to the *Guinness Book of Amazing Nature* published yesterday.

## THE WORLD

	See	Bar	Max	Min
Abbeville	3.8	0.01	13	55
Angoulême	3.8	0.01	13	55
Antenne	3.2	0.29	13	55
Belfast	3.1	0.01	13	55
Birmingham	6.5	0.06	15	59
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Croston	7.7	0	16	61
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Edinburgh	5.8	0.01	17	63
Exeter	5.8	0.01	17	63
Falmouth	5.8	0.01	17	63
Glasgow	5.8	0.01	17	63
Harwich	5.8	0.01	17	63
Hawthorn	5.8	0.01	17	63
Hull (Albert Dk)	5.8	0.01	17	63
Kings Lynn	5.8	0.01	17	63
Lark	5.8	0.01	17	63
Lowestoft	5.8	0.01	17	63
Milford Haven	5.8	0.01	17	63
Newquay	5.8	0.01	17	63
Portsmouth	5.8	0.01	17	63
Swansea	5.8	0.01	17	63
Wexham	5.8	0.01	17	63
Witch	5.8	0.01	17	63

## EUROPE NOON TODAY



## THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Coldest: Dublin 11C (52F). Warmest: Jersey 20C (68F). Worstcase: Alnham 0.29 in. Summest: Isle of Wight 9.0 hrs. For 24hrs to 2pm Thursday.

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Lowestoft	5.8	0.01	17	63
Milford Haven	5.8	0.01	17	63
Newquay	5.8	0.01	17	63
Portsmouth	5.8	0.01	17	63
Swansea	5.8	0.01	17	63
Wexham	5.8	0.01	17	63
Witch	5.8	0.01	17	63

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-



Employment: High pound and Far East turmoil force manufacturers to lay off thousands while service sector booms

# Vickers closure 'no political fix'



Chandler: no pressure

VICKERS FURIOUSLY denied claims of a "political fix" after announcing yesterday 1,100 job losses and the closure of its Challenger 2 tank factory in Leeds rather than a similar facility in Newcastle, close to Tony Blair's Sedgefield constituency.

The cutbacks were offset by two big job-creation announcements in service industries. Morrison's, the Bradford-based supermarket group, is creating 2,500 jobs at 100 new stores,

BY MICHAEL HARRISON  
AND COLIN BROWN

while Bank One International of America is locating its European headquarters in Cardiff Bay, creating 1,000 jobs. The Leeds closure will cost 450 jobs, but there will also be 200 redundancies at the Newcastle tank factory and 40 at the Vickers Bridging plant in Wolverhampton, which makes portable bridges and pontoons. A further 450 jobs will be shed

from Vickers marine propulsion and turbine divisions.

Sir Colin Chandler, Vickers chairman, said that he had spoken to Jonathan Powell, the Prime Minister's chief of staff, about the impending closure, but he denied any political pressure had been brought to bear. Vickers said the Newcastle plant cost £1m a year less to run and was more productive than the Leeds factory, which was bought from the government in the Eighties.

A senior Vickers executive added that the Leeds plant still had a "civil service mentality" and was staffed by "lots of Geoffrey Boycott-type sullen Yorkshiremen". Although the Newcastle plant draws some of its workforce from Mr Blair's Sedgefield constituency, the Leeds closure will affect three ministerial constituencies — those of the Industry minister John Birt, the Foreign Office minister Derek Fatchett, and Nick

Brown, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The two factories were completing a £1.5bn order for Challenger 2 tanks from the Army. Leeds will close at the end of next year, while the long-term future of the Newcastle plant will depend on Vickers success in attracting some of the £5bn in export orders. The cutbacks follow Vickers' failure to win a £3bn "battlefield tank" order from the British, German and French govern-

ments. GKN, which won the order, is merging its armoured vehicles business with Alvis, which was a member of the Vickers consortium. Union sources claimed that there had been pressure from Downing Street to limit the job losses in the North-east, where 24 hours earlier Mr Blair faced some of the 600 workers who are being made redundant in his own constituency by Fujitsu. But Labour MPs in the Leeds area discounted the

claims. George Mudie, a junior education minister, said: "The idea that Number 10 and the DTI intervened is an outrageous suggestion. It's the conspiracy theory gone mad." John Redwood, Tory industry spokesman, blamed government policies and warned that there could be more job losses. "It is the Government's explosive mix of high sterling, high taxes and high interests rates that has driven so many factories to the wall," he said.

## Heartland to bear the brunt of a hard winter

BRITAIN FACES a long cold economic winter, with mounting job losses in manufacturing.

Turmoil in the Far East and the strength of the pound can only result in more plant closures.

Yet as the heavy industries continue to contract, thousands of jobs are being created in the service industries such as the banks, supermarkets, and in the ubiquitous call centres springing up everywhere.

While the big-name closures in Britain's traditional industrial heartland grab the headlines, government figures show that about 250,000 more people are in work now than in May last year when Labour came to power. Traditional black spot areas will continue to suffer the worst, including parts of the Midlands, the North-west and especially the North-east where the shutdown of the Siemens and Fujitsu factories brought home the seriousness of the decline in manufacturing.

At the TUC conference in Blackpool this week, ministers brushed aside calls for intervention to bring down interest rates, which have sucked in foreign money, led to the high value of sterling and pushed up the prices of British goods.

A week's shutdown of the Hoover plant in Merthyr Tydfil and the threat of lay-offs among the 1,000-strong workforce, as well as the closure of a British Steel rolling mill at Rotherham announced yesterday, can be blamed partly on the strength of the pound.

Employment in manufacturing has fallen by more than 30,000 since May when exchange rates firmed.

Until recently exporters have kept going by accepting lower profit margins, but there is a limit to their forbearance.

There has also been a steep drop in domestic demand with high street retailers faced once again with mounting stocks. Shoppers are simply not buying high-priced British goods — another strong element in the problems hitting Hoover.

Faced with an economic meltdown, Asian manufacturers are selling goods at rock-bottom prices and British businesses are unable to compete.

Consumers are also having to cope with a steep rise in the cost of living. Typical mortgage repayments have increased by 25 per cent in a year and higher indirect taxes have contributed to the misery.

BY BARRIE CLEMENT  
Labour Editor

"People are not spending and they are not borrowing," said Ian Brinkley, a senior TUC economist.

There is great political sensitivity over job losses in the North-east where several leading members of the Government, in addition to the Prime Minister, have their constituencies.

The closure of the £1.1bn Siemens electronics plants on North Tyneside with the loss of 1,100 jobs and the shutdown of the Fujitsu factory in Mr Blair's Sedgefield constituency were prompted primarily by the worldwide collapse in semiconductor prices.

Some workers at Vickers' Leeds plant, where 650 jobs are going, suggested that political considerations may have meant that the Newcastle factory was favoured at the expense of Leeds.

Economists believe that men working full time will be the main victims of the economic downturn, owing to the sectors in which they tend to work.

The new jobs will emerge in the service sector, such as the call centres being established by banks and finance companies to maintain regular contact with their customers and cut costs.

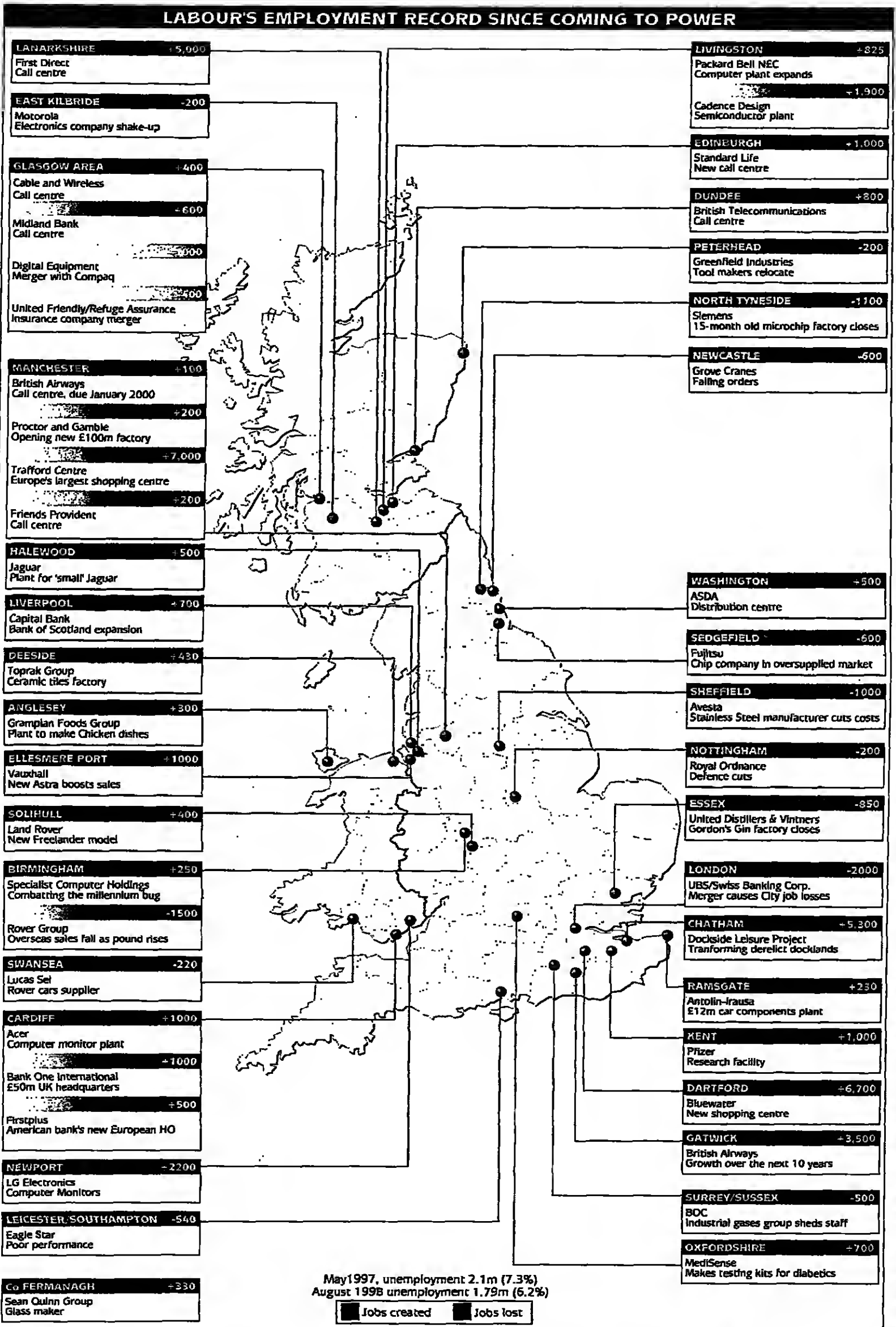
These centres are employing low-paid female staff rather than the higher earning males who have lost their jobs in manufacturing.

Yesterday's announcement that a leading US bank is to base its £50m UK headquarters in the Cardiff Bay development, creating 1,000 jobs, on the same day that the Vickers said it was closing the Leeds tank factory, is the clearest possible example of the changing employment patterns.

Most observers argue that the present economic problems will prove a pale shadow of those experienced in the early 1990s.

Ministers have rejected calls this week for a change of course in economic policy or the early cut in interest rates being demanded by manufacturing.

Earlier in the week Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, told the TUC that the Bank recognised the problems of "internationally-exposed businesses," but held out no hope of altering the tight monetary policies.



## 'How am I going to find another job?'

BY ESTHER LEACH

EMPLOYEES AT Vickers Defence Systems in Leeds, who learnt of their factory's impending closure during the morning, walked through the gates at lunchtime grim-faced and pessimistic about their chances of finding new work.

Many of them have spent all their working lives with the company, helping to develop it as a major European tank manufacturer. Ancillary worker Graham Groves, 53, who has been with the company for 18 years, said many of the workforce had reacted with anger and shock.

"How am I going to find another job at my age? We all thought they would close the Newcastle factory because it is smaller, but that's too close to Tony Blair's constituency," said Mr Groves.

Engineer Bill Dodsworth, 49, from Wetherby, who has three children, has worked in the gun unit at the factory for 21 years. "They just told us they are going to wind down the factory. Everyone was devastated. People thought it would be Newcastle and a lot of us believe there must be a political reason because Tony Blair would be in trouble if they did."

"I suppose we have just got to get on with it now. No one has told us anything about redundancy yet or given us any advice about finding new jobs. I suppose that will come later."

Painter David MacDonald, 42, from York, arrived at the plant just two months ago after giving up a reasonably paid job. "I came to Vickers because the pay and conditions were better. And now this. The first thing I did was telephone my wife and she just burst into tears."

"I was made redundant at the Railway Factory in York two years ago and we got through it then, and we will get through it now."

Earlier Sir Colin Chandler, Chief Executive of Vickers Defence Systems, said the company would help to find new jobs for their employees. "It was a difficult decision to make. We will work with the Government, the European Commission and the Leeds and Yorkshire Development Agencies to secure new manufacturing jobs for our employees."

The factory will be run down progressively as the order for the Challenger 2 tank is completed, and will close by the end of 1999 with the loss of 450 jobs. Some of the site and workforce at Leeds will be retained for a specialist service centre.

## Sterling's rise harms tourism

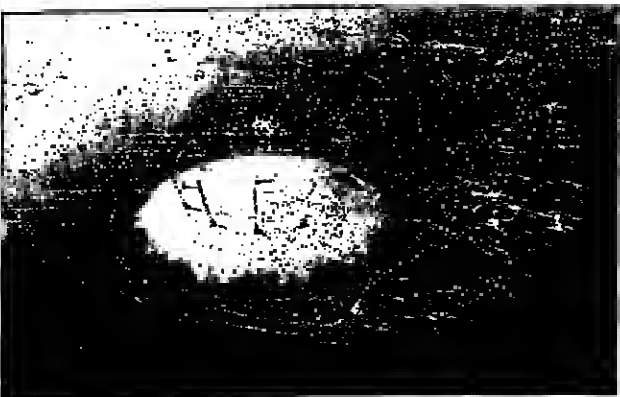
BY LINUS GREGORIADIS

STERLING'S HIGH value is losing the tourist industry hundreds of millions of pounds and thousands of jobs, according to a report issued yesterday by the British Tourist Authority.

The amount of money spent by visitors to the UK last year remained at £12bn, the same level as 1996, even though the number of visitors had risen to a record 25.5 million.

"The continuing strong pound, coupled with the financial crisis in Asia, means 1998 is unlikely to be any easier," said David Quarmbay, the BTA's chairman.

"The 16 per cent rise in the value of the pound against European currencies will have cost Britain over £850m in rev-



The Millennium Dome is the tourist hope for 2000

enue from European visitors in 1997 and 30,000 tourism jobs in this country."

BTA said that the rise in value of sterling could also cost Britain its fifth place, above

Germany, in the world tourism market.

Despite the gloomy prognosis for the tourist industry in the short term, Mr Quarmbay said that the UK would benefit from

the arrival of the new millennium, even if the pound continued to gain in strength.

BTA has forecast a bumper year for British tourism in 2000 because of the Millennium Dome and popularity of Greenwich. It is estimated that that there could be 28.3 million visitors who would spend £14.5bn.

The BTA is launching a £3m marketing campaign — "Britain Now is the Time" — to attract more visitors for the turn of the century.

"Britain will be the centre of world attention for the year 2000," said Mr Quarmbay.

Supporting the Millennium Dome project, he added: "Britain is now accepted as the focus of the celebration... Not only do we have historic Greenwich, with its links with time,

but we have the Millennium Dome with all its attractions."

"I think it is the greatest tourism opportunity this country has ever seen," he said.

According to the BTA's figures for 1997, the Europeans spent just over £600 in Britain; visitors from the Americas spent £2.8bn; and those from Asia, the Middle East and Africa contributed £3.2bn.

Mr Quarmbay said that the UK was still growing in popularity as a holiday destination for many nationalities, especially Americans and Canadians.

"The good news is that there has been a steady growth from North America of around 10 per cent and this will help to counteract poor performances from other regions," he said.



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# Viagra 'a danger to older men'

VIAGRA may pose risks to older men who are apparently healthy and not just to those with heart problems, researchers report today.

Doctors describe the case of a 65-year-old man who experienced acute chest pain half an hour after taking one 50mg pill. He was taken to hospital where an ECG showed he had suffered a heart attack, but after being treated with drugs he made a full recovery.

Researchers from the Drug Safety Unit in Rijswijk in the Netherlands, who report the case in *The Lancet*, say it is worrying because the man had none of the risk factors for a heart attack such as high blood pressure, diabetes or previous heart disease.

He did not smoke and was only an occasional drinker. The attack cannot have been triggered by sexual exertion - a common cause of heart attacks - because he had not attempted sexual intercourse when the chest pains began.

"The close temporal relation between ingesting sildenafil (the chemical name for Viagra) and the onset of severe chest pain due to acute myocardial infarction (heart attack), suggests that sildenafil was causally related," they say.

Although there have been many anecdotal reports of men suffering heart disorders after taking Viagra, including 69 deaths in the US linked with it, the reports contained no details of the patients' state of health before taking the drug, according to *The Lancet*.

Figures released by the US Food and Drug Administration earlier this month showed that 46 of the 69 had heart attacks and two had strokes. In the remaining 21 the cause of death

BY JEREMY LAURANCE  
Health Editor

was unknown. The average age of those who died was 64.

The FDA, responsible for licensing the drug in the US, said it had not changed its view of the drug's safety but would continue to evaluate the need for regulatory action. Warning labels tell users to avoid nitrates, a common medicine for heart problems, because of the known risk of interaction.

However, the Dutch researchers say that the number of men involved in trials of Viagra before licensing was low compared to the expected demand. "Some adverse reactions may be disclosed only when large numbers of men are exposed," they say.

They admit that they cannot rule out any pre-existing heart disease in the patient, but having no symptoms he appeared healthy, and would not have been picked up in any screening process.

They also suggest a mechanism by which the drug may cause heart attacks. Viagra is known to trigger headache, flushing and nasal congestion as a result of dilation of the peripheral blood vessels - the mechanism which also results in erection of the penis. However, the effect of redistributing blood to peripheral parts of the body away from the heart "may have undermined adequate coronary perfusion and led to myocardial infarction".

A spokesman for Pfizer, manufacturers of Viagra, said the company would follow up the case along with all other reports of adverse reactions. He added: "It has never been established that Viagra was causally related to any death."



Richard Madeley and Judy Finnegan provided the pill. Peter and Annette Brown found that it made all the difference



Neil Munns/PA

## This morning, there's one happy couple - thanks to Richard and Judy

PERHAPS IT was the pressures of time or of having to perform in front of two and a half million viewers, but in the end the live television trial of Viagra was, literally, a bit of a flop.

Richard and Judy, renowned for their cosy and caring brand of television took their sympathy one step further on their show *This Morning* and invited three couples for a live test of the anti-impotence pill.

The couples, two of whom have not had sex for four years, were given one little blue pill and packed off to a hotel with instructions to report back in an hour. The nation held its breath. "They're all in for a very exciting morning - we hope,"

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

said Judy Finnegan caringly. Her husband Richard Madeley, who failed completely to disguise his relief that he was not similarly afflicted, said earnestly: "Sex is so important, isn't it."

Amid much ribald laughter and nudging of ribs, the pills were duly swallowed and the couples took their leave.

Or as Judy preferred to put it: "The pills have gone down and now we will see what comes up." Richard was more blunt: "Apparently it starts with a tingling sensation and ends in carpet burn."

As the minutes ticked by, the screen was filled with footage

of a tower block collapsing - shown in reverse - and a pill thrusting up from the bottom of the screen.

A spokesman for the show denied that it was a crass approach and made fun of what, after all, a serious problem for many. "I absolutely deny that. We were not poking fun. It was an important medical experiment conducted by the viewers for the viewers."

Andy Burrows, spokesman for Pfizer, the makers of Viagra, said: "I am concerned that this type of approach trivialises a serious medical condition that causes great distress to sufferers and their partners."

Ann Craig, director of the Im-

potence Association, said they had received dozens of complaints about the experiment.

"This makes the whole issue seem like fun when it certainly isn't," she said.

But what of the couples? Richard leapt eloquently in to the breach. "We had one no result, one reasonably OK result and one way hey hey give me more," he giggled.

Returning with very red faces, Alec Witherington and Peter Goudie, admitted only partial success. Mr Witherington, 52, who has been impotent for four years, said it was better than previous cures but had not worked for him.

Mr Goudie, 63, who has suf-

fered for the last 18 months, said the pressure of being packed off to a hotel for an hour was too much. "There was some improvement but nothing to get excited about."

Not so Peter Brown, 50, who has not had sex for four years.

"As we got out of the car at the hotel I felt myself getting flushed. It started in the lobby," he said shyly. Then getting in the mood, he grinned. "I could go another ten rounds."

Caring as ever, Richard cut them off mid-sentence and rushed to announce the daily quiz. "If you were prescribed Viagra you would be a) impotent b) important c) incompetent."

Well, that's caring TV for you.

## Young driver's mistake killed five

BY PAUL WATSON

FOUR TEENAGERS and a 12-month-old baby died after the "inexperienced" driver of a high-powered car seemingly lost control and smashed into an oncoming milk lorry on a country road, an inquest was told yesterday.

Stephen Dawson, 19, of Durham City, had never passed a driving test and had been banned for motoring offences.

The smash claimed the lives of Mr Dawson, his best friend Lee Foster, 19, and Mr Foster's 17-year-old fiancée, Jacqueline Rennie, his youngest sister Rebecca Foster, 16, and his son Jake.

Such was the force of the smash that Jake was thrown almost 100 feet from the Vauxhall Carlton.

The inquest heard that all five victims died from severe brain damage and fractured skulls after the crash on the A691 near Wiltton Gilbert. Mr Foster died during surgery in Dryburn Hospital, but the others were killed instantly.

Lee Foster had bought the car days before the crash.

The inquest heard how the vehicle came over a rise on the road seemingly out of control, clipped a kerb and veered across the carriageway into the path of the milk lorry, where it was hit on the passenger side. The lorry travelled a short distance with the car crushed underneath before it broke free.

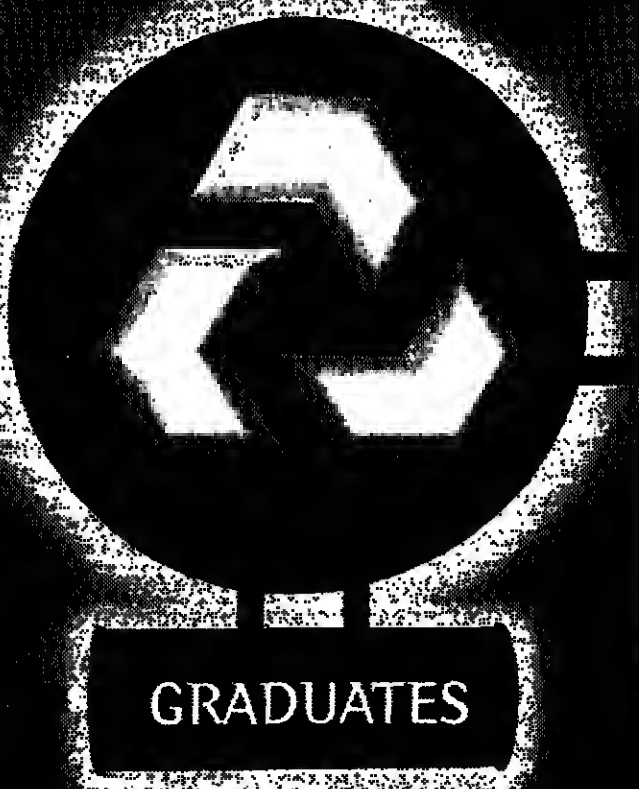
The lorry's driver, Michael Thorburn, 45, of Morpeth, Northumberland, was unscathed.

The West Durham coroner, Andrew Tweddle, recorded a verdict of accidental death. He told the victims' families: "It's quite likely that Mr Dawson lost control of the car possibly as a result of inexperience, excessive speed or a combination of both."

"There are times when we all drive inappropriately for whatever reason, and for the most part we get away with it, but in this case the driver and passengers paid the ultimate price."

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# Met admits errors in Lawrence case

SIR PAUL Condon, the Metro-

politan Police Commissioner, admitted yesterday that his officers made fundamental errors in the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation, but denied that racism or corruption played any part in the case.

Delivering Sir Paul's final submission to the public inquiry into Stephen's death, Jeremy Gompertz, QC, said the force was determined to learn from its mistakes. But he added: "The Metropolitan Police Service will not roll over" and accept blame for everything which is wrong in society in Britain today.

"The service accepts that it is a key player in the elimination of racism in this country, but we are not solely responsible for this task."

In a separate submission for the senior detectives who led the murder inquiry, Sonia Woodley, QC, attacked Stephen's parents, Neville and Doreen, for playing "the race card" and said Mrs Lawrence's mistrust of police contributed to the breakdown of relations.

BY KATHY MARKS

Mr Gompertz said the Met rejected allegations of prejudice. "The service accepts there was some insensitivity by some police officers which may have been perceived as racism, but denies the investigation was 'permeated' by racism, whether overt or subconscious," he said.

The commissioner also disagreed with the views of Dr Robin Oakley, an eminent consultant to the Met on race issues, who told the inquiry he believes there is a culture of institutional racism within the force.

Mr Gompertz acknowledged incompetence, saying many mistakes were made, "some of them serious". He added: "But the nature of the crime and the lack of evidence, as opposed to information, were partially responsible for a mediocre investigation."

He also defended the much-criticised decision of senior detectives to delay arresting the five prime suspects - Jamie



Sir Paul Condon

Acourt, Neil Acourt, David Norris, Luke Knight and Gary Dobson - for a fortnight. It was a "sound and reasonable" decision, he said.

After Stephen was murdered by a white gang in a race attack in south-east London in 1993, police missed an opportunity to secure useful details from a key informant at an early stage, Mr Gompertz said.

Some important witnesses were not well handled, certain suspects were eliminated too quickly and identification pa-

rades were not always properly conducted.

Mr Gompertz said that officers accepted the principal share of responsibility for the rapid deterioration of relations with the Lawrence family. Stephen's friend, Duwayne Brooks, should also have received better treatment, although it had been "legitimate" for police at the scene to regard him initially as a suspect.

Mr Gompertz said there was no evidence to substantiate the Lawrences' claim that detectives colluded with the criminal families of the suspects to ensure they escaped justice. The scenario would have necessitated a widespread conspiracy involving at least seven officers, which was "highly improbable".

In a foreword to the written version of the final submission, Sir Paul acknowledges the significance of the public inquiry, saying it "has fundamental implications for the Metropolitan Police Service, for policing nationally and for society as a whole".

The inquiry continues today.



Amy Jenkins, top, Jude Law, above, and Ewan McGregor will all contribute to Sky's movie 'Tube Tales', the first of five full-length films it is to make, costing £2m - £6m each. They will be produced within the next two years

## Sky turns to movie-making as age of digital TV dawns

THE SATELLITE television company BSkyB yesterday moved into the movie business with the announcement that it will make five feature-length films in the next two years.

The chief executive Mark Booth said the first of the films, each costing between £2m and £6m, will be Tube Tales, a story of two life experiences on the London Underground. Ewan McGregor from Trainspotting will make his directorial debut for the film alongside Jude Law, who starred in Wild, and Amy Jenkins, who wrote BBC's This Life.

The film foray raises the stakes in the company's battle with the Granada-Carlton joint venture ONdigital to secure subscribers for the new digital

BY JANE ROBINS  
Media Correspondent

television service Sky will launch on 1 October.

Mr Booth said BSkyB wanted to sign contracts with more BBC presenters following its recent success in securing the services of the veteran film reviewer Barry Norman and the football pundit Jimmy Hill. As part of Sky's attempt to secure universal acceptance and respectability the company would be interested in bidding to film the Queen's Christmas message when ITN's contract runs out next year.

In an enthusiastic presentation of his expectations for digital, Mr Booth said the company's research showed that 14 per cent of households wanted

to buy digital television by Christmas. Sky was confident of reaching its target of 200,000 subscribers this year.

Premier League football would be available on pay-per-view next season but Mr Booth was anxious to improve Sky's image in the eyes of its customers with soothing messages about the continuing availability of the wide range of matches on the general Premier League service.

Acknowledging that during the Manchester United negotiations, Sky has been portrayed as in a hostile way, he emphasised the need for the company to build trust with consumers. He gave a number of pledges on the future of Manchester United, including an assurance that BSkyB

would not change kick-off times to suit Asia or America. "That," he said, "was obviously a dumb idea." He reassured supporters that BSkyB would not change the name of Manchester United or move it from Old Trafford.

In support of the recent speech in Edinburgh by his colleague Elisabeth Murdoch, daughter of Sky's main shareholder Rupert Murdoch, he said his company perceived the BBC in a wholly favourable light, and praised its efforts to develop digital channels.

Personally he said, he supported the continuation of the licence fee as the best way of funding the BBC - a position directly opposed to that taken by The Sun, a newspaper which is owned by Mr Murdoch.

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Cornish artist Sue Hill has sculpted this giant head on the mound of a tree root in the famed Heligan Gardens at St Austell, Cornwall. 'We wanted to embody the spirit of the garden,' she said. 'Heligan is theatrical and playful'

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# Minister condemns A-levels

A GOVERNMENT minister launched a scathing attack on the A-level "gold standard" yesterday, saying it was out of place in the modern world.

Baroness Blackstone, the Higher Education Minister, told universities they should insist on applicants studying a far broader range of subjects than the traditional three A-levels taken by most sixth formers. And she called for reform of the university admissions system, saying academics could be missing "potentially brilliant" students by relying on A-levels.

BY BEN RUSSELL  
in Manchester

She told the annual meeting of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals in Manchester that universities should act to bring into higher education thousands more mature students and people from poorer backgrounds. The minister said: "It is increasingly clear that the traditional model is wrong, both for young people themselves and for the nation."

The traditional post-16 curriculum was designed for a

world which no longer exists - a world in which higher education was the preserve of a highly specialised elite. The problem "has bedevilled the English and Welsh education system for too long".

She said: "It is a fact that young people in England and Wales typically follow a narrower programme of study at advanced level, and are taught for less time, than young people in other European countries. There is, frankly, no good reason why this is so."

Vice-chancellors said broad-

er study in sixth forms was to be welcomed, but warned it might lead to an increase in four-year degrees if standards were to be maintained in highly specialised subjects such as engineering. Martin Harris, Manchester University vice-chancellor and the committee's chairman, said: "There is a challenge for all of us in reconciling a broader 16 to 19 curriculum with one of the shortest degree programmes in the developed world."

Reformed A-levels, including a new half-size AS-levels, are to

be introduced from 2000 with a new "key skills" qualification in communications, computing and applied maths. Ministers hope the changes will encourage sixth formers to take five or more subjects, while maintaining the rigour of a conventional three A-level course.

Lady Blackstone said universities should act to make sure young people from poor backgrounds had a real chance of entering higher education.

Middle-class teenagers dominate universities, with three times as many young people

from professional backgrounds entering higher education as those from working class homes. Lady Blackstone said: "I want you to look at your admissions policies. Are you missing promising, perhaps even potentially brilliant, candidates by not being imaginative enough in the way you select people?" She called for more opportunities for part-time students and the expansion of evening classes run by university departments.

From next year, university tuition fees will be waived for

part-time students on benefits, who make up one in ten of all part-timers in higher education. An extra 15,000 full-time undergraduate places will be created, with 20,000 part-time places, as part of the Government's effort to attract an extra 500,000 students into further and higher education by 2002.

Professor Harris denied that universities discriminated against any social group and said he wanted to offer opportunities to all people capable of benefiting from a university education.

## Jewish leader angers women

BY CLARE GARNER

LORD JAKOBOVITS, former Chief Rabbi of Britain, has dismissed the plight of women whose husbands refuse to grant them a Jewish divorce as "a marginal problem". Women reacted to his remarks with anger.

He said the figures cited for agunot - known as "chained women" - were exaggerated and that the solution was fewer divorces. "We know they don't run into hundreds," he said. "It's not even 100. If we want to solve the problem of agunot, we have to solve the problem of divorce. We are dealing with a marginal problem, not the core of the problem."

His remarks, at an International Council of Jewish Women (ICJW) forum on "Halachic solutions to the problems of agunot" and reported in today's Jewish Chronicle, infuriated campaigners and victims.

Rosalind Preston, who chaired the 1994 "Women in the Community" review commissioned by Lord Jakobovits's successor, Dr Jonathan Sacks, said his speech "underlines why we have this problem". She took issue with his calculation of the numbers of women affected, saying: "If there are so few, how come there are so many in this room?"

The 125-strong audience included a woman from Leeds who has been "chained" for 46 years and a Londoner who had waited 20 years for her "get", or religious bill of divorce. Sandra Blackman, 55, recently "freed" after seven years, said: "There was an atmosphere of anger among the whole audience."

According to campaigners, husbands refuse to grant their wives a "get", even when a civil divorce has gone through, as a bargaining counter or simply out of vindictiveness.

Lord Jakobovits said yesterday that he had not intended to "belittle the tragedy" suffered by "chained women", but wanted the ICJW to pay more attention to the high divorce rate.

June Jacobs, forum chairwoman and world ICJW president, said she was saddened by his remarks.

## Warning: homework can harm

HOMEWORK IS not always a good thing. Much of the evidence about its benefits is inconclusive and the case for it in primary schools is weak, a paper published today says.

As the Government prepares the first national guidelines on how much homework pupils should do and pours money into homework clubs, academics from London University's Institute of Education attack the view that homework necessarily raises standards.

In a review of nearly half a century's research on homework, Dr Susan Hallam and Dr Richard Cowan also warn parents who help their children with homework that their efforts may be counterproductive.

Homework tends to increase when schools are under pressure, says the paper to be presented at a British Psychological Society conference on education. In 1993 after "payment by results" for teachers was introduced, time spent on homework rose sharply until parents and social reformers campaigned for a reduction.

In 1929, a leading education journal asked "Is homework necessary?" after a survey found that 11-year-olds were doing between 1 and 12 hours

BY JUDITH JUDD  
Education Editor

a week and those over 11 between 7.5 and 20 hours. (The Government proposes just over four hours for 11-year-olds and up to 12.5 for secondary pupils.)

By 1935, school inspectors were recommending a reduction for the under-12s but in the Sixties a government report called for more after research revealed a divide between grammar school pupils, who did a lot, and secondary modern ones, who did very little.

The new paper argues that most research into the effect of homework on standards has been unable to separate it from the effect of other factors such as ability, the quality of teaching and teachers' expectations.

Much of the evidence in this country comes from inspectors and, most recently, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). It is based on observations in schools and does not take into account individual achievements.

An Ofsted report three years ago commented cautiously on homework: "Where it is treated seriously by staff and pupils, it has the potential to raise standards." Dr Hallam's paper says that homework does appear to help pupils to pass secondary



Battles over homework may be unnecessary - even pop music in the background can be an aid to concentration

Rud Xavier

school exams. It continues: "Simply increasing pupil workloads will not of itself improve standards and in some cases where pupils become overloaded may have a negative impact on the performance of individual children."

What counts, say the

authors, is quality not quantity, and there should be more investigation of what types of homework are most effective.

Many people see disadvantages in homework - it can increase negative attitudes to school and motivation, lead to cheating and copying and

increase divisions between children from different backgrounds. But it also offers the opportunity to spend more time on a task, to memorise facts and to encourage independent study and time management. Recent studies suggest that

parents who spend hours helping their children with homework may be misguided. One found that mothers' help had no effect on children's achievement. Another, from London University's Institute of Education, suggested that middle-class parents who help with homework may worsen family

tension by comparing siblings and by projecting their own experiences on to their children.

Those parents infuriated by offspring who persist in writing essays in front of the television or to the din of Oasis should keep cool. Background noise may be an aid to learning.

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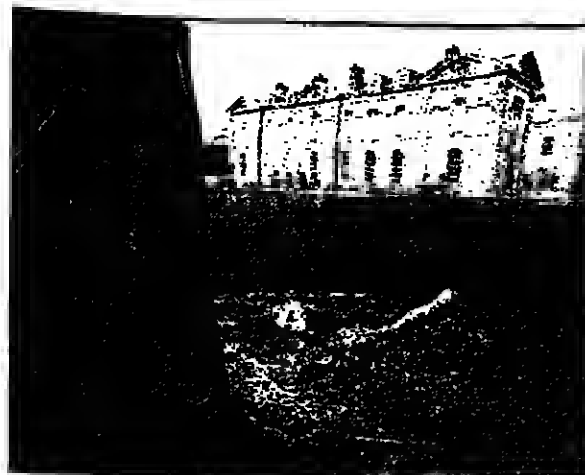
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# One man's £7m gift turns stately home into an art gallery for the people



ONE MAN'S dream to make art more enjoyable for the wider public will be realised with the completion of a gallery at Compton Verney, an 18th-century stately home lying in 40 acres of Capability Brown parkland.

Peter Moores, the 66-year-old multimillionaire philanthropist from the Littlewoods Pools family who bought the derelict house in 1983, announced a £7m gift yesterday to complete the transformation of the Warwickshire mansion into an art museum.

Just as significantly, he is providing £1m a year for running costs and an art purchase budget of £200,000 a year, something of which most regional galleries can only dream.

Mr Moores has already spent £5m on buying 300 paintings and over the past few years has put £7m into the renovation of the house - a sum he is now doubling.

He opened the art gallery on a trial basis for local residents this summer and will now shut it for a year while architects Stanton Williams complete a huge restoration and landscaping project. It will open properly in 2000 as an interactive art gallery like none other in Britain.

"Too often people find museums intimidating and boring, or don't go to see art at all.

BY DAVID LESTER  
Arts News Editor

I will make it a nice day out, with luncheon and a walk round the garden," said Mr Moores.

The entrance hall has a message from Mr Moores saying: "Compton Verney is opening so you can get as much fun out of art as I've had. Enjoy yourselves."

He said yesterday he would be displaying only "arresting images or arresting subjects". He added: "It has to be art that speaks to me. No one is going to look at men in wigs and black costumes. But people stop to look at a woman in a black Spanish dress."

Brian Hayton, the gallery director, added: "Peter wants to share his enthusiasm. When we reopen there will be interactive displays, perhaps with something as simple as a stereoscopic viewer looking at pictures.

"With portraits, for example, we will ask why is the sitter dressed as he is?"

"We will show the effects of different lighting on pictures. We will spend the next year exploring the technology and the most effective methods of involving visitors."

The house near Stratford-upon-Avon has already been painted off-white and its lower floors painstakingly restored. It



Peter Moores wanders through part of the collection of Italian art and (top left) the exterior of the refurbished stately home

Andrew Fox

has 26 miles of pipes under the floors to warm the building by heat extracted from the lake using heat exchangers.

The history of Compton Verney reads like a mixture of Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* and *Dads Army*.

Designed in the 18th century by Robert Adam, in Capability Brown grounds, it

was the home of the Willoughby de Broke family until they sold it in the 1920s.

During the Second World War it became the School of Smoke Camouflage where Army scientists formulated a plan to combat the Luftwaffe with vast clouds of smoke over British cities.

The Pioneer Corps stationed

there celebrated VE Day by tipping the balustrades of the Adam Bridge into the lake.

The house stood empty until the Eighties, when businessmen had a plan for an opera house, the Glyndebourne of the Midlands. Now Mr Moores is fulfilling his dream for a lavish, scenic gallery that will be illuminating for the art histor-

an and yet fun for the family.

The categories in the collection comprise 19th-century naive art; British portraits (including a portrait of Henry VIII from the "Circle of Holbein"); and Oriental works of art, especially Chinese ritual bronzes.

There will be 15th and 16th-century North European paintings; 17th-century Baroque

paintings by Neapolitan and Genoese artists (including a £1.3m acquisition of Bernardo Strozzi's *The Incredulity of St Thomas*, his most expensive purchase so far).

There is also a room devoted to British folk art.

Mr Moores is adamant that no air of solemnity should surround the collection. He has

arranged for local schoolchildren to help him to hang his folk art collection and has set aside a room in which they can play once they have seen enough.

He has also asked them to write comments under some of the paintings. Under a painting of an inordinately long pig is the question: "Do you think the artist meant this to be funny?"

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# Mandelson denies Post Office sell-off

PETER MANDELSON offered unions a choice between "opposition and legitimate influence" yesterday and seemed to rule out privatisation of the Post Office.

In his first speech since becoming Trade and Industry Secretary, he warned the TUC conference in Blackpool that the Government would "never be a soft touch".

Derek Hodgson, general secretary of the Communication Workers Union, took Mr Mandelson's announcement that "no decision had been taken to privatise the Post Office" as an indication that it would remain wholly-owned by the state. He said that private conversations had reinforced that view. It is thought, however, that there is a continuing rift in the Cabinet on the Post Office issue.

Mr Mandelson, who worked for the TUC 20 years ago, received a polite reception.

John Monks, TUC general secretary, regarded the speech as "encouraging", but there remains deep suspicion in the movement about Mr Mandelson's views.

**INDUSTRY**  
By BARRIE CLEMENT  
Labour Editor

son's views. The minister acknowledged that unions had made "huge efforts" to modernise, with the result that industrial relations had been transformed in many companies from the old-style battlefield to new-style co-operation. "But that modernisation must go further still. Indeed if my analysis is right, it is never-ending," said Mr Mandelson.

He believed passionately that modernisation was essential and drew attention to the movement's failures. Only 6 per cent of young employees were union members and only 18 per cent of those under the age of 30. "The density of trade union membership is the lowest in the fastest growing sectors of the economy," he said.

He advised that unions should concentrate on three areas: delivery of better services to members; developing partnerships with employers

and welcoming their profits, and working with the government to protect employees and develop public services. Trade unionists had to make the choice between "opposition or legitimate influence". The debate should not be about whether unions were too strong or weak; the choice was effective, modern unions or ineffective organisations "frozen in time".

The Trade Secretary refused to guarantee that the "Fairness at Work" White Paper would be implemented in full. Employment rights legislation had to be seen to be "fair and balanced" to win enduring support.

Mr Mandelson was expected to place a limit on compensation for unfair dismissal, while the White Paper calls for its removal. "This legislation won't turn back the clock to the days of strikes without ballots, flying pickets and mass action. What it will do is demonstrate it is possible to have flexibility in the workplace and to treat people well."

Leading article,  
Review, page 3.



Peter Mandelson at the conference in Blackpool yesterday

John Voos

## Words of friendship from man in a sharp suit

THE BALLROOM of the Winter Gardens is an old-time symphony of plaster elegance, all red plush balconies, ornate rhomboids in the ceiling and winged gryphons looking down on the whirling throng. Except that, at conference time, a shocking irruption of steel mesh girders turns the noble room into a vile modernist installation piece: steel lighting gantry, steel lectern, steel video screen...

Would Peter Mandelson bring some New Labour steel to the plaster cherubs and globe chandeliers of the ancient *palais de danse* that is British trade unionism? Or did he have something else on his mind as he sat between John Edmonds and John Monks, smiling into a point-blank barrage of cameras as he waited to speak.

It was a big moment - his first speech to the TUC, his first big, public speech as Trade and Industry Secretary, his first real-life address to the Labour movement en masse.

He looked immaculate in dark suit, red tie, blinding white shirt and matching teeth. But as he looked this way and that before the exploding lights, you could see he was nervous.

At the podium, a delegate was hanging on about "crooks and spivs" in Russia - Mandelson's grin was fixed. Were they having a go? When John Edmonds introduced him, joshingly as - "a TUC employee who's made good" (Mandelson once worked at Congress House in his early 20s), was there a hint of *lesse majeste* in the air?

He needn't have worried - Mandelson was never likely to tread on anyone's toes in this crucially important ballroom. Not for nothing had he sat, rewriting draft after draft with his distracted PPS, all the way from Euston on the 6.35pm night before.

This was a speech with everything in it that could buy friends, win supporters, convert the sceptical. He paraded his TUC credentials (without mentioning that he parted company from them acrimoniously, after his precocious visit to James Callaghan in Downing Street).

He praised his Minister of State, Ian McCartney, a portly Congress glad-hander last seen schmoozing in the bar of the Stakis Hotel at 1am in his green, golfing-tourist T-shirt. Mandelson even dragged in his own grandfather to illustrate how the unions saved the Labour Party in the Thirties. He praised the unions for being unions. Look at me, he seemed to say - I'm your friend. We can work this out together. He did everything to woo Congress short of actually calling it "Darling" and taking it out for lunch at Robert's Oyster Bar.

It was all a little too simple. He emphasised partnership, harmony, mutual respect and co-operation - all words which, if you looked them up in *Rogers's Thesaurus*, you'd find under the heading of "union".

### THE SKETCH



JOHN WALSH

He said John Prescott had been right. And Gordon Brown was right. And the Tories were all wrong. He told Congress they could trust him. (Phew). He told them he believed in unions. (What a relief). He told them that, from now on, they'd get only candour, straight-talking "and no more spin - honest". A shout of laughter went up, as the delegates considered the phenomenon of a leopard promising an end to all that spots nonsense. Mandelson is not an accomplished actor - there's something too contained and held-in about him, with those minimal hand movements, that angular, Easter-Island-stature head - but he did a fair impersonation of a schoolteacher congratulating Class 3b on their needlework. How sensible their debate on the single currency had been. How right they were to worry about safe working conditions. Well done. His own preference, he told them, was for unions that were "modern, democratic, representative and influential, as if the hall might be full of people who 'preferred' some other kind."

But just at the moments when they might have felt weary of being patronised by this sharp-suited, permanent reassurance salesman, he did something brilliant. He regarded the shirt-sleeved, bearded and truculent delegates sitting sideways on their metal chairs, holding their mimeographed resolutions, and did the political equivalent of diving off the stage.

"I know some of you..." (pause) "...in this hall..." (pause) "...will have a bigger question at the back of your minds..." (Pause).

The audience's collective brain raced. What could the question be? "Where did you get that suit?" "Would you recommend a Nokia 500 or a Motorola 750 for motorway conversations?" "What's the capital of Uruguay?" But no - the question was, "Where do you think, Peter, the trade unions fit into your bright, knowledge-based future?" Neat, eh? The answer was as banal as you'd expect. But telling the conference that when they addressed him they naturally called him "Peter" - now, that was a masterstroke.

After that they were putty in his hands. Instead of mentally saying "Look here, Mandelson, you bastard...", the union members mentally tried a different tack - "Peter? Have you got a minute...?"

For all his hark-at-me self-deprecation about image and spin, playing the personality card turned out to be Mandelson's winner after all.

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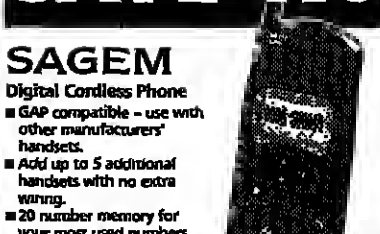
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# Grizzlies pushed 'towards extinction'



THE GRIZZLY bear, symbol of North America's wilderness, is under severe threat in one of its heartland habitats, a report said yesterday.

It is being hunted in the Canadian province of British Columbia in a way that will put it on the road to extinction, says the Environmental Investigation Agency. The London-based group says the British Columbia government regards grizzlies as a species to be hunted, yet has no idea how many there are in the province.

Its estimate of 10,000 to 13,000 may be a 300 or 400 per cent overestimate and with unreported kills by poachers the population is likely to be dwindling faster than the bears can reproduce, says the agency.

The forest habitat is also under continual widespread assault from clear-cut logging, road-building, mining and other industrial developments.

The agency has a track record in highlighting early warning signals of major declines in important species. It provided much of the evidence of large-scale ivory poaching, which led to the 1989 ban on commercial trade to try to save the African elephant.

Now it wants an immediate moratorium on trophy-hunting of grizzlies while a long-term review of the population is done and protected areas set up.

"The Government of British Columbia is clinging to a dangerous and irresponsible policy in the face of overwhelming evidence that these magnificent creatures are in dramatic and possibly irreversible decline," says the agency chairman, Allan Thornton, himself from British Columbia.

The grizzly is a North American sub-species of the brown bear, *Ursus arctos*, which is found around the world, but the *Ursus arctos horribilis* is big-

ger, stronger and fiercer. Grizzlies, named for the white tinge on the fur, can stand seven feet tall, weigh 850lb and kill a steer with one blow of a paw. They occasionally attack and kill people.

Once they roamed from Alaska to Mexico but that range shrank drastically in the last century. They died out in California, which has the grizzly on its state flag, in 1925.

The animals are now concentrated in Alaska and western Canada, British Columbia's huge ancient forests holding up to a quarter of the grizzlies in North America. It is their very wildness that attracts hunters, and they are the most prized American hunting trophy.

The British Columbia government issues 350 licences a year to kill grizzlies, but the agency says its method of estimating the population is "hopelessly flawed" without an attempt to actually count the animals. The agency estimates that for every two bears killed legally, at least one is killed illegally as a trophy or to supply the trade in bear parts used in traditional Chinese medicine. Still more are killed as "wounding losses" (shot animals that retreat into the forest to die unreported) and in road accidents.

"British Columbia is placing the demands of a small pro-hunting lobby above conservation and biodiversity, which as a Canadian I find shocking and outrageous," says Mr Thornton.

"The BC Government and its federal counterpart in Ottawa must act now to protect the grizzly bear, before it is too late." Last night the British Columbia government in Victoria could not comment on the agency's report.



A grizzly on the Pacific coast, endangered by hunters and poachers, varies its diet by digging up clams and other shellfish

James Balog/Black Star

## Passenger jets in near-miss over Essex

TWO PASSENGER jets came within a mile of colliding over the English countryside, safety experts reported yesterday.

Errors by air traffic controllers and pilots were blamed for the near-miss between a Boeing 747 and a Gulfstream IV in July last year.

A report by the Department of Transport's Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) revealed that the Japan Airlines Boeing, carrying 268 passengers and 20 crew, and a Gulfstream private jet, owned by the ITT Corporation, were at one point a mile apart horizontally, and 100ft vertically. A few seconds later, the vertical separation had risen to 200ft but the horizontal distance narrowed to just three-quarters of a mile.

The AAIB said misses of this type, when the planes had been so close, were rare. Aircraft should be 1,000ft apart in height, but if that gap is smaller they should be three miles apart horizontally.

The near-miss took place at about 12,000ft above Lambourne in Essex. The report found that the Boeing, en route to Heathrow, was not descending at the minimum required rate of 500ft per minute and had not reported its correct speed to the con-

BY PHILIP THORNTON  
Transport Correspondent

trollers. It added that the controller who gave authority for the Gulfstream - carrying three passengers and two crew from Sardinia to Luton - to descend did not apply the correct procedure.

The AAIB said traffic conditions were light and the incident did not occur because of an "overload situation".

The Civil Aviation Authority, parent body of the National Air Traffic Control Services (Nats), said yesterday it accepted all five of the report's safety recommendations. A spokesman said: "UK airspace is amongst the safest in the world and Nats is doing everything it can to maintain and improve that. The fact that we have accepted these recommendations shows we are committed to maintaining our safety record."

The CAA added that one of the reasons it had lobbied the Government for partial privatisation of Nats was because it did not have sufficient resources in the public sector. "We are looking at a public-private partnership to give us the resources we need to develop the UK air traffic control services to meet future traffic growth."

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**STEVE RICHARDS**

*'If the Blackpool TUC conference was a den, it was stuffed full of tame animals'*

THE FRIDAY REVIEW, PAGE 3







# Jobs slump 'will boost crime rate'

AN INCREASE in the crime rate is being forecast by the Home Office because of the slowdown in the economy.

Christopher Nuttall, the Home Office's director of research, said yesterday that an upturn in crime would place an added burden on Britain's prisons, which are already seriously overcrowded.

The warning came as the Home Office released statistics

By IAN BURRELL  
Home Affairs Correspondent

showing that courts were being increasingly tougher in sentencing offenders.

"The largest single determinant of the crime rate is the state of the economy," Mr Nuttall said. "If the economy starts to cool off, this will have an impact on recorded crime rates."

With the prison population

standing at a record 65,000, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, is anxious that the courts should make full use of alternatives to custodial sentences.

Figures released by the Home Office yesterday show that average sentences are continuing to rise. Since 1992, the average sentence length has increased from 19½ months to 22½ months.

Last year, 53,100 offenders

were given immediate custody by the courts, an increase of 10 per cent on the previous year.

In all courts, 22.6 per cent of offenders were given immediate custody, the highest figure for at least 40 years.

The use of cautions, fines, probation orders and community sentences fell last year.

Last week, the Home Affairs select committee urged the courts to make greater use of

alternatives to prison, particularly community sentences.

Senior government officials are concerned that the severity of sentencing by the courts far exceeds public demand for harsher punishments.

In recent Home Office research, 55 per cent of people underestimated the courts' use of imprisonment for burglary by at least 30 per cent. Only 8 per cent overestimated its use.

For rape, nearly 60 per cent of respondents were under the impression that fewer than two out of three offenders were sent to prison. In fact, 99 per cent of rapists over the age of 21 are immediately jailed.

"The mismatch between public perceptions about sentencing and the reality matters," said Mr Nuttall. "People's actions will be affected by the threat of punishment, and by

their beliefs about the consequences.

"If they think the risk of imprisonment is much less than it really is, then the deterrent effect will be weakened."

He added: "Sentencers believe there is strong public pressure for greater toughness."

"Our research showed that the public did indeed think that the courts should be tougher

but they also believed them to be much less tough than they actually were."

Mr Nuttall said that when members of the public were asked to suggest an appropriate sentence for an offender - after being given details of the offence and the person's criminal history - they invariably suggested a "significantly more lenient sentence" than the offender actually received.

## School plan in doubt after Straw resigns

CONTROVERSIAL PLANS to rebuild the school attended by Jack Straw's son and daughter could collapse after the Home Secretary resigned as its chair of governors. Some governors of Pimlico School in central London are urging Mr Straw to stay on until a contract for the project is signed.

A vote on plans to knock down the landmark Sixties building and replace it with a privately built school and housing development was passed by 10 to 8 in July with Mr Straw's support.

Now the Home Secretary is likely to be replaced, at least temporarily, by a vice-chair who is opposed to the idea. His fellow parent-governor, who also voted in favour of the plan, has stepped down from the board altogether and his seat will almost certainly be filled by an "anti".

Mr Straw's son has left to go to Oxford University, and his daughter is in the sixth form.

Sources close to the Home Secretary said he had always planned to step down once July's vote on the public-private rebuilding initiative was over.

Supporters of the scheme have suggested Mr Straw was shaken by bad publicity over the plan, which is opposed by most parents and staff, and that he did not want to be involved in further controversy. After governors voted for the plan in July, parents passed a motion of no

By FRAN ABRAMS  
Westminster Correspondent

confidence against him. Jenny Bianco, chairman of Westminster City Council's education and leisure committee, said: "I am very sad Jack Straw felt he had to resign."

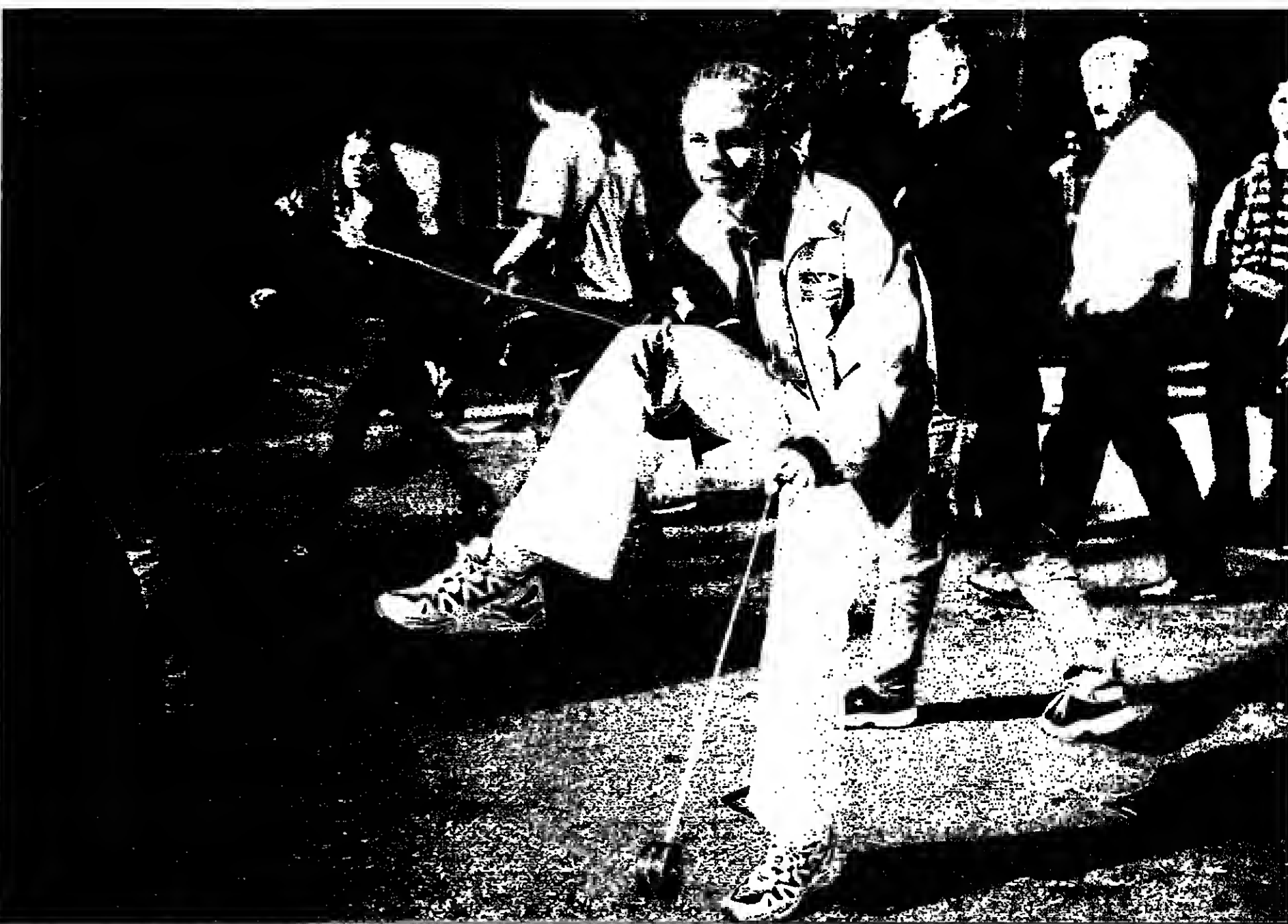
"I am disappointed he isn't there to see it through. The contract should be signed by the turn of the year."

The building's radical design, of concrete and glass, overheats in summer and leaks in winter. It is also short of space. But most parents and staff want to refurbish the existing building. They say the school will be heightened by being a building site for years.

Westminster council and a narrow majority of governors say the building is irredeemable and that a bid by the St George's Partnership to combine a new school with 140 flats is the only viable option.

Michael Ball, the chair of the school's parent-teacher association, said: "The change of chair makes it more likely that the governors will see sense and start steering away from the rocks they have been steering towards."

Steve Barlow, a teacher governor, believes the project could destroy the school. He said: "There will be considerable disruption for perhaps five years. Many parents are bound to withdraw their children."



The world yo-yo champion, Jenny B, giving an impromptu lesson in the art of yo-yoing, in Covent Garden, London, to mark the launch of the first yo-yo with a brain, the Omega X-Brain. It is made by Bandai, the company responsible for the Tamagotchi, a virtual pet that was popular with children last year. *Kalpeh Lathigra*

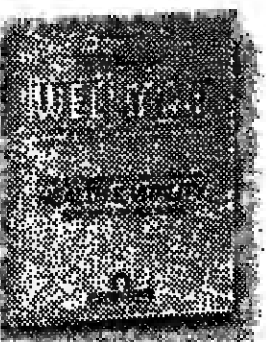
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# Pitfalls await Queen's tour

THE QUEEN flew to Brunei yesterday to start a tour of South East Asia overshadowed by potential pitfalls and embarrassments. They include royal squabbles in Brunei, economic crisis in Malaysia, security threats and a leader with a longstanding suspicion of the former imperial ruler.

In the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur, where the Queen arrives on Sunday to close the Commonwealth Games, officials confirmed letters had been received threatening bombs at the stadium. The threats are regarded as a hoax.

The biggest shadow over Malaysia is political – the fierce struggle being fought between the country's most charismatic young politician and its outspoken and erratically anti-British prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad.

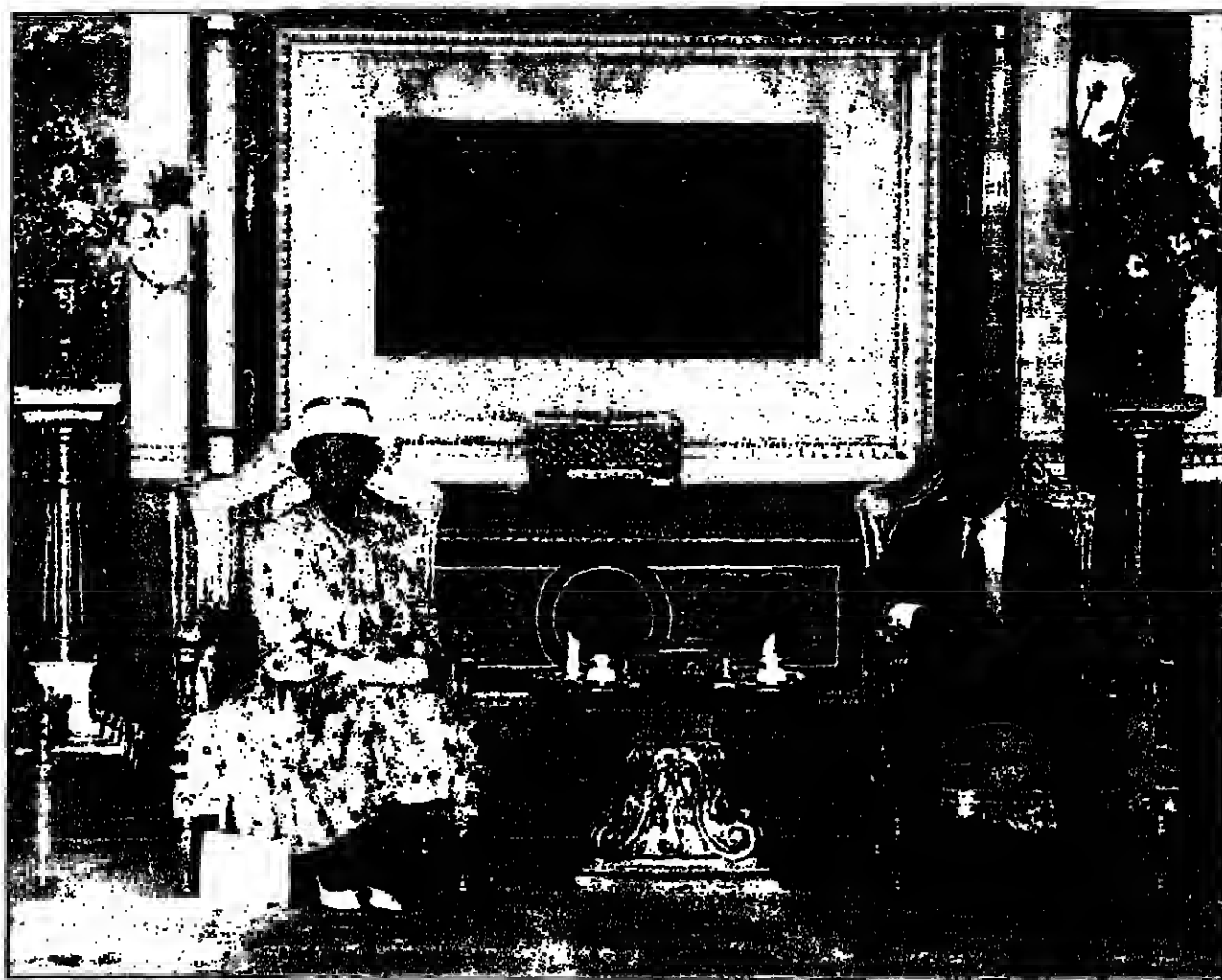
Throughout Dr Mahathir's 17 years in power, he has displayed an edgy, even hostile attitude towards the country's former colonial power. In the early Eighties, he mounted a "Buy British Last" campaign

By RICHARD LLOYD PARRY  
in Kuala Lumpur

after Margaret Thatcher's government raised the fees charged to foreign students at British universities, many of whom were Malaysian. In 1994, he flew off the handle again after British newspapers exposed an aid-for-trade scandal surrounding the Pergau Dam. Recently Dr Mahathir's penchant for pointing a proud, accusing finger at the former coloniser found a new outlet during the Commonwealth Games.

At the opening ceremony last Friday, presided over by the Malaysian king and attended by Prince Edward, the organisers presented a nationalistic dance dramatisation of Malay history, which some regarded as chauvinistic. Then came a 45-minute performance that portrayed the peaceful life of the native Malaysian peoples horribly overshadowed by inflatable plastic dragons, representing the malign forces of Portuguese and British imperialism.

"There was a certain



The Queen and Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah at the Sultan's palace in Brunei yesterday

amount of gnashing of teeth," one Commonwealth diplomat said, "what with Prince Edward being there."

During the last two days of the state visit, before the Queen leaves next Wednesday, the focus will be on the increasingly heated political battle between Dr Mahathir and his former right hand man, Anwar Ibrahim. Mr Anwar was sacked two weeks ago as deputy prime minister and minister of finance. Devastatingly, for a devout Muslim, he has been accused of adultery, sodomy, consorting with prostitutes and even treason.

Mr Anwar has now embarked on a campaign of reform, demanding greater freedom of the press, improved human rights and an end to political manipulation of the police and judiciary. His nightly speeches have attracted crowds as large as 50,000, and police say his arrest is imminent.

Only one thing appears to be guaranteeing his liberty: the Games, and the imminent arrival of the Queen. "I believe their timing will be perfect," he said. "They will wait until Her Majesty leaves."

Leading article,  
Review page 3

## Kohl fights it out in the east

By DARIUS SANAI

HELMUT KOHL, riding high after his party's unexpectedly strong showing in the Bavarian state elections last week, launched a final offensive yesterday in eastern Germany.

The impact of this final leg of the national election campaign, covering states where parties on the far right have done well in recent voting, could prove crucial in the polls in 10 days.

The Social Democrats are also in a last-minute dash for votes in the former Communist East Germany.

Through a television and newspaper advertising campaign painting the eastern states, many of which are blighted by industrial wastelands and high unemployment, as "flourishing landscapes", Mr Kohl hopes to capture up to 40 per cent of the vote there.

He may have his work cut out. Opinion polls show support for his party to be at least 10 percentage points down on the target figure.

Analysts suggest the CDU

needs to win at least 35 per cent of the vote in the east to win nationally. With many people in the east still undecided, however, Mr Kohl's task is difficult but not impossible.

He staked his future on the regeneration of the east after masterminding Germany's reunification in 1990. Around £300m was pumped into the area's industry and social infrastructure, only for mass closure of factories and businesses to ensue.

The result is a culture of resentment and isolation, ideal breeding grounds for the far-right parties which continue to reach double figures in polls. One recent survey showed that neighbouring areas of western Poland across the Oder river, which benefited from none of Bonn's largesse, are flourishing with low unemployment and 20 per cent growth, much to the chagrin of the deprived Germans of the states of Lower Saxony and Brandenburg.

## 19 slaughtered near border drug run

NINETEEN MEXICANS including women and children were apparently lined up against a wall and shot at a farm near Ensenada, below the American border at San Diego, Mexican television reported yesterday.

A reporter for the country's Televisa network who arrived on the scene said he saw the bloodied bodies slumped by the wall. There were mounds

By PHIL DAVISON  
Latin America Correspondent

of spent cartridge cases from what were thought to be AK47 assault rifles littered the area.

"I've never seen anything like this before. It's shocking," said the reporter, Jaime Nieto. Some reports said all the victims had been living in three houses on a cattle ranch near

by and there were other reports of two survivors in the area but this could not be confirmed.

The Mexican authorities have now expelled reporters from the scene without offering any further information, the television station said.

Ensenada is a port city about 50 miles south of the border, lying between San Diego in California and Tijuana, in the

Mexican state of Baja California. The area is a major smuggling point for cocaine – some believed to be from South America – a trade that both the United States and the Mexican authorities say is largely controlled by the Arellano Felix family.

The clan is considered one of the most violent drug gangs in Mexico.



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Daimler-Benz has developed the first-ever fuel cell car to use methanol as the fuel. Based on the Mercedes A-class, the revolutionary new vehicle represents a decisive breakthrough in the quest to develop a drive system with extremely low emissions.

The car, known as NECAR3 (New Electric Car), fills up with liquid methanol. With the aid of a reformer system located in the rear of the vehicle, the methanol is converted on-line into hydrogen through water-vapour reformation. The hydrogen gas is then fed into the fuel cells where it is combined with atmospheric oxygen – but without combustion – to directly produce electrical energy used to power the vehicle.

Previous fuel cell systems could only operate in conjunction with bulky hydrogen tanks for fuel storage. With NECAR3, the entire process is much more direct: press the accelerator pedal and an astonishing 90 per cent of the system's power is available in just two seconds.

In terms of driving dynamics, this puts fuel cell vehicles using methanol on a par with conventional petrol or diesel-

powered cars.

Dispensing with the hydrogen tanks not only reduces vehicle weight, but it also greatly improves the everyday practicality of the new vehicle: petrol stations can theoretically handle methanol, which doesn't require special safety measures, nearly as easily as petrol or diesel. What's more, NECAR3 has a range of some 250 miles on a tank of 8.7 gallons of methanol – similar to conventional vehicles.

Daimler-Benz decided to opt for methanol because it is the most suitable fuel for hydrogen generation. Although petrol and diesel were also considered, the efficiency levels of these fuels would have been lower. For the introductory phase of fuel-cell powered vehicles at least, engineers are considering the possibility of a multi-fuel concept which, as the name suggests, would permit the use of different types of fuel until methanol is widely available.

The drive system of NECAR3 is virtually emission-free. Neither nitrogen oxides nor soot particles are created during conversion of methanol to hydrogen or in the subsequent

generation of electrical energy. And thanks to the extreme efficiency of the fuel cells, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions are substantially below those of conventional cars.

With the advent of onboard hydrogen generation, a crucial step has been taken towards developing the environmentally friendly fuel cell technology that could eventually power vehicles of the future. An equally important milestone on the road to this lofty goal is the incorporation of the entire system into the 3.57 m long A-class. Once again, the innovative double-floor sandwich concept employed in the A-class has proved its worth, allowing the complete installation of the fuel cells and several auxiliary units underneath the passenger cell. The methanol fuel tank, reformer and control system are located in the rear of the car.

The methanol reformer technology in NECAR 3 has benefited from a wide range of technological advances at Daimler-Benz. Not only has the system been made smaller and more efficient, but the performance and dynamic response of the reformation

process have also been improved. The result is a compact unit of some 18 inches in height. Located in the rear of the A-class, the reformer directly injects hydrogen into the fuel cells. Hydrogen production occurs at a temperature of 280° centigrade: methanol and water vaporize to give hydrogen (H<sub>2</sub>), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), and carbon monoxide (CO).

The hydrogen protons travel through the polymer membrane while the electrons travel through an external circuit to arrive at the positive electrode. There, the oxygen, hydrogen protons and electrons combine to form water. An electric motor attached to the external circuit is then used to drive the vehicle.

Fuel cell cars represent one facet of the wealth of research and development being carried out by Daimler-Benz into the way that cars and other forms of transport can be improved for the future. If these advances continue with the same speed as they do currently, we could be driving fuel cell cars by 2004. For more information, contact the Mercedes-Benz website at [www.mercedes-benz.co.uk](http://www.mercedes-benz.co.uk)



# President's four-hour video nasty



Bill Clinton taking time out with his dog Buddy yesterday in the White House rose garden

Rick Wilking/Reuters

THE WHITE HOUSE was bracing itself for further damage limitation last night as Congress prepared to release a highly embarrassing videotape of President Bill Clinton.

Mr Clinton's image, already tarnished by revelations of his sexual habits and alleged cover-up efforts, will be ripped to shreds as Americans see a usually calm and avuncular man quarrelling with his accusers, losing his temper and avoiding difficult questions.

The tape is a record of Mr Clinton's testimony to Kenneth Starr's inquiry into his sexual misdoings and attempts to cover them up. It shows the President as evasive and angry, far from his current public persona of a man who is contrite about his past behaviour. He wavers over definitions of sexual acts, refuses to answer some questions, argues about others, which he says criminalise his private life, and is generally unhelpful.

He was, of course, conducting his defence in a legal context, but the appearance will do him grave damage. It will harm his image, and most importantly, confirm the view that he sought to avoid the truth.

The tape runs for four hours, covering the afternoon of 17 August when the President spent in the White House Map Room under questioning from Mr Starr's assistants. The President had spent the morning being briefed on planned missile strikes against Sudan and Afghanistan, a bizarre juxtaposition that cannot have

BY ANDREW MARSHALL  
in Washington

helped his temper. He was also arguing with aides about the terms of a televised broadcast that evening to the American people on his misdeeds, a broadcast which at the time was deemed by many to be insufficiently contrite, and which indeed criticised Mr Starr.

The cable networks - CNN, MSNBC and Fox News Channel - plan to air all four hours, virtually unabridged. They were scrambling to decide on the precise arrangements yesterday. In particular, there may be scenes or words that they do not wish to air, and some may use a tape delay. The main networks - CBS, ABC and NBC - will show excerpts, but probably not all of the tapes. All are aware that the timing - the tapes will probably be released this morning - means that they will have little time to review all four hours before they air it.

The Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives met yesterday to approve the release of the tape. There was strong resistance from the panel's Democrats, but they are in a minority. The Republicans say it is important people see how the President tried to evade questions, as part of an effort to show he is guilty of perjury.

It is not just the videotape that is at issue: there are 2,500 pages of appendices to the report as well as 17 boxes of other material - transcripts, videos and audiotapes. Some of it is dynamite, containing highly personal rev-

elations by witnesses, and some of it may never be released.

The committee started off by claiming that it would be a bipartisan effort to decide whether to launch impeachment proceedings: that has very quickly come to grief, and things are now little better than a bar-room brawl. "They talk about wanting bipartisan co-operation but so far they have just been rolling over us," said Maxine Waters, a Democrat on the committee. "They have the votes and they can do that."

The possible consequences of recent events led the Congress to forge a unique agreement yesterday that neither party would use smears against the other in forthcoming elections. It followed revelations that Henry Hyde, the Republican chairman of the Judiciary Committee, had been unfaithful to his wife more than 30 years ago - raising fears in both parties that the Clinton revelations would trip off a "sexual Armageddon", where every politician's dirty laundry was washed in public.

John Linder, chairman of the Republican campaign committee, and Martin Frost, his Democratic counterpart, agreed that neither organisation would fund candidates who use personal attacks.

"Initiating a personal attack on anybody running for office is simply off limits," said Mr Linder. "We are soon going to have no one of any stature willing to put themselves through this wringer, and it is sad for America."

## Why America's seat at the UN is still empty

BETWEEN THE United Nations and the United States there is nothing but grief. The feud festers over unpaid US dues, tensions have mounted over policy towards Iraq and now, just as President Bill Clinton prepares to address the General Assembly on Monday, there is this: Washington has no proper ambassador here.

A week ago, Bill Richardson left the post to become Energy Secretary in the Clinton cabinet. His successor is Richard Holbrooke, who achieved diplomatic celebrity in 1995 by brokering the Dayton Accord to end the war in Bosnia. But Mr Holbrooke's confirmation by the US Senate has faltered because of a somewhat mysterious ethics investigation.

Inquiries into allegations of misconduct by Mr Holbrooke by both the Justice and State departments meant that the White House last week missed a deadline for submitting his nomination to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

BY DAVID USBORNE  
in New York

headed by the irascible Senator Jesse Helms. With Congress due to go into recess on 9 October, there is no chance Mr Holbrooke will be confirmed before next year.

The source of it all was an unsigned, poison-pen letter sent to the State Department in July. Its author, presumed to be an old foe, drew attention to Mr Holbrooke's link with a former US Ambassador to Switzerland, Larry Lawrence, who has since died.

This week, lawyers for Mr Holbrooke said he had made "an honest mistake" by failing to disclose that, after returning from his job as ambassador to Germany in 1994, he lived rent-free in an apartment belonging to Mr Lawrence in Washington. It should have been listed as a "gift" valued at \$12,000.

Mr Holbrooke, however, has said nothing about other claims in the letter - that he used Mr

Lawrence to land a lucrative job with Credit Suisse First Boston, the investment bank, when he left government service in 1996 and that, once at the bank, he maintained improper contact with US diplomats.

If Mr Holbrooke has enemies - many consider him to be as brusque as he is brilliant - he also has many friends who dismiss the allegations. Most diplomats believe he will overcome the charges. This week, President Clinton reaffirmed his choice, saying his friend was the victim of "inertia in Congress".

That, however, may not have helped Mr Holbrooke, whose greater ambition has long been to serve as Secretary of State. Meanwhile, there is an awkward hiatus in US representation in the UN as the Iraq crisis threatens to erupt again and other burning issues include developments in North Korea and Russia. For now, America's seat on the Security Council is occupied by one of Richardson's deputies, Peter Burtleigh.

### IN BRIEF

#### Iraqi missiles were 'free of VX'

A SPOKESMAN for UN weapons inspectors declined comment on a report that tests conducted in France and Switzerland contradicted US findings that Iraqi missiles were armed with deadly VX nerve gas before the 1991 Gulf war. The London-based Al-Hayat newspaper said it had learned that Switzerland and France had unofficially informed the UN secretariat that most of their tests of the samples of Iraqi warheads showed they were free of VX.

#### Indians perish in floods

TWELVE PEOPLE drowned and tens of thousands were evacuated to escape rising flood waters in the western Indian states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. About 50,000 people were evacuated after the Tapi river in Surat, in Gujarat, rose to dangerous levels.

#### Smoking set to kill one in five

SMOKING IS becoming a global health burden and could account for one of every five deaths within a decade, the World Health Organization's head said. "Tobacco will be responsible for 2 million deaths, 20 per cent of all deaths in 2010," said Gro Harlem Brundtland.

#### Bombing suspect vanishes

A MAN THAT US authorities suspect of involvement in the bombing of the American embassy in Nairobi has disappeared. Abdallah Mohammed Fagui apparently boarded a plane on 22 August from Comoros to Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, then vanished two days after US officials asked authorities in Comoros to trace him.

#### Boy sad but glad after good deed

A FLORIDA boy said yesterday he returned a briefcase full of jewels to its rightful owner because his mother told him to and that he was glad he had done the right thing. Still, William Hand, 11, found the episode a little depressing. "I was jumping up and down, singing 'We're in the money, we're in the money,'" he said.

SUZANNE MOORE

"I guess no man ever made it with the chat-up line: Has anyone ever told you that you could never be a model?"

— THE FRIDAY REVIEW, PAGE 5 —

## Pentagon pulls the plug on leaky net

BY ANDREW MARSHALL

AMERICA'S NATIONAL security establishment has woken up to the fact that vast quantities of sensitive information on its staff, facilities and plans are available on the Internet.

In a parallel to the wartime campaign of "Careless talk costs lives," the Pentagon has clamped down on government Web sites that make life easy for Washington's adversaries.

The key discovery, according to USA Today, was that floor plans of the residence of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were posted on a Web site. The revelation came after the US missile strikes on Sudan and Afghanistan, when the US refused to release details of the ships or aircraft involved in the operations. But anyone with access to the Internet could have quickly worked out which vessels were in place and discovered valuable information about their movements, equipment and personnel.

The Internet holds vast amounts of information that is security related, much of it distributed by the military.

Though much of the information is unclassified, it makes life for an amateur spy absurdly easy. Even the radio frequencies of secret transmissions from sites such as the highly classified Roswell Air Force Base ("Area 51" to UFO fans) are readily available.

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# Spain's peace inspired by the Irish



Eta, which brought terror to the Basque region for years, may join the peace process

SPANIARDS, and Basques, reacted with joy yesterday to the declaration by the separatist group Eta of a permanent truce after 30 years of bloodshed.

While the conservative government in Madrid played down the radical nationalists' gesture, Basques themselves were encouraged and in some cases elated, though they stressed this was just the beginning. The Interior Minister, Jaime Mayor Oreja, recognised that most people's reaction was "happiness and relief" but added that Eta's bloody record "proves that scepticism is necessary".

Among Basques who have sought a peaceful solution for years, many feel the ceasefire marks the beginning of a long process that could end the conflict for good, with the bonus that the gunmen could participate with their honour intact.

The spirit and detail of the Irish peace process have been crucial. Eta's political allies have sought and received guidance in opening up their own peace process from Sinn Fein.

BY ELIZABETH NASH  
in Madrid

Martin McGuinness, for one, has advised the pro-Eta Herri Batasuna party, and visited the region in 1996. Other Sinn Fein leaders including Gerry Adams have also been there.

Joseba Pemash, regional spokesman for the Herri Batasuna (HB) in the Basque city of San Sebastian, said as much in an interview with *The Independent* last autumn when he said that his organisation had launched a discussion forum on Ireland and had invited other Basque parties to participate.

"If Madrid were to adopt something like a Downing Street declaration, we would study it with interest," he said.

For the first time HB was opening out to other forces, instead of remaining sealed inside its own rhetorical bubble, endlessly demanding that prisoners be brought nearer home, and haranguing even potential sympathisers about the non-negotiability of an independent Basque homeland.

One of the most positive responses came from a low-key non-party mediating group called Elkarrri, which had for years sought to persuade all political forces of the need for a negotiated end to the conflict.

The softening of HB's approach followed one of Eta's worst recent attacks – the kidnapping and murder in July last year of the young Basque councillor Miguel Angel Blanco, which brought millions of Spaniards on to the street in protest. HB realised that it was alienating the very people it sought to win.

But the new line had quietly taken shape before July, during an HB visit to Northern Ireland. "This was decisive in changing their attitude," an Elkarrri spokesman said yesterday. "Because until that moment, HB despite its good relations with Sinn Fein had been sceptical about the IRA ceasefire and said the Irish and the Basque processes were not comparable. But on that visit, and after discussions with Sinn Fein, HB decided to abandon the hard line." It sent delegations and study groups to Ireland and deliberately copied Sinn Fein's *rapprochement* with John Hume's SDLP by seeking alliances with the centre-right Basque Nationalist Party and other democratic Basque forces.

The process even survived the imprisonment of the entire HB leadership in December for collaborating with gunmen. While still supporting Eta ("but not its violent methods"), HB began to carve out a political independence it had never had before and sought to supplant Eta as leader of the national independence movement.

Eta has been seriously weakened recently by French and Spanish police action, although even the Interior Ministry admits its killing power remains intact. Meanwhile, the political climate has rarely been more disposed to welcome Eta's offer, after an Irish inspired agreement last week among most Basque forces to launch a dialogue even without a ceasefire.

## Is this the last gasp of European terrorism?

POSSIBLY, JUST possibly, the "indefinite" ceasefire announced on Wednesday evening by Eta could mark the end of a long cycle of home-grown European terrorism, which over some 30 years has taken in excess of 4,000 lives.

No one can be sure that Eta's truce is not a trap. But if the example set earlier this year by IRA/Sinn Fein – with whom the Basque separatist movement is said to have had frequent and friendly contact – is anything to go by, the omens are more than promising.

The political violence which began in four European countries at more or less the same time, had two distinct well-springs. Despite operational contacts and structural similarities, the nationalist terrorists in Ireland and Spain had vastly different goals from the left-wing groups in the former West Germany, and the far right, soon joined by the far left, in Italy.

For Basques and Irishmen, it was a matter of achieving their own country. The slaught-

pression would be followed by a mass popular uprising, out of which would emerge the leftist utopia.

In Italy the main groups were the Red Brigades and Prima Linea (Front Line), spiritual heirs of the 19th-century anarchists, whose most notorious deed was the abduction and murder in 1978 of Aldo Moro, the Christian Democrat leader, as he attempted to reach an "historic compromise" with the Communists.

Their West German equivalent was the Baader Meinhof gang, out of which grew the Red Army Faction (RAF). Their victims included the banker Hans-Jürgen Ponto, and Hans-Martin Schleyer, the industrialists' president.

But by the mid-1980s in Italy, and around 1990 in Germany, such terrorism was finished – through a combination of good police work, *pentiti* or "repentant" terrorists in Italy, and a realisation that violence only increased, rather than undermined, the legitimacy of the systems they sought to overthrow.

In Germany, although the RAF only formally dissolved itself earlier this year, the coup de grace was the disappearance of East Germany and the sanctuary it offered.

In Italy too the end of the Cold War allowed a more normal political system to emerge, rendering terrorism pointless.

Only some of these factors applied to the nationalist movements. But over 30 years they too have been worn down: by concessions granting them some of what they wanted, by the growing importance of political wings of their respective nationalist movements in Ireland and Spain, and a slowly dawning realisation that their wars were unwinnable.

Thus, if political momentum towards a settlement can be maintained, terrorism in both countries should logically be marginalised and ultimately disappear.

Terrorism of course tends to obey a logic of its own. But Euro-terrorism of the old variety seems on its death-bed. What will remain is a cruder, less organised violence, mainly right wing, and racist and ultranationalist. It is hardly a threat to the system. But as ugly events in Germany, Italy, France and Britain show, it is not to be dismissed out of hand.

And, if the new terrorism locks horns with terrorism imported by the unwanted immigrants from outside Europe, it could get worse.

The ingredients of trouble abound. The Algerian population in France, so disliked by the far right, has links with the protagonists in the savage war in Algeria proper.

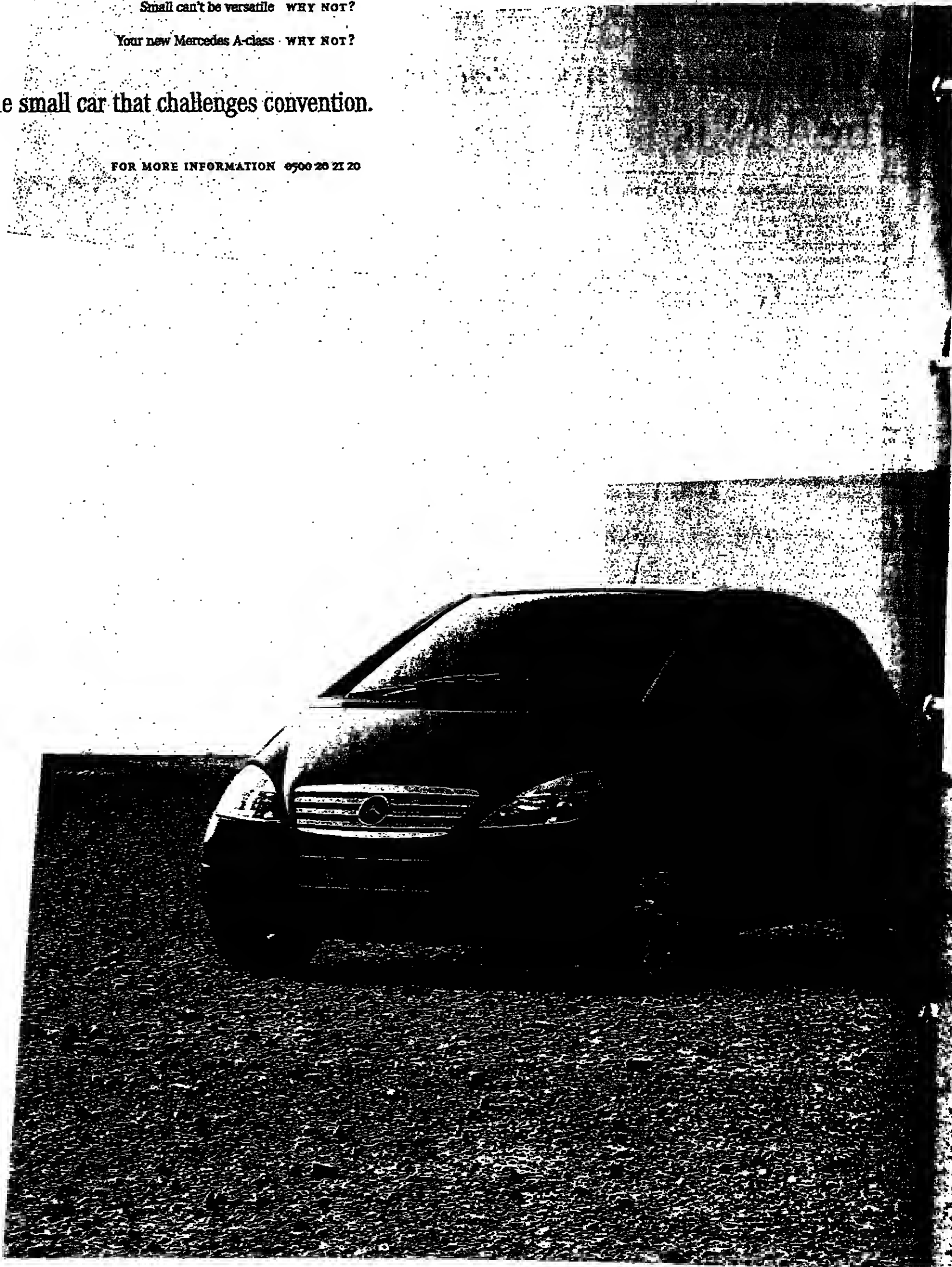
Kurds in Germany meanwhile could find themselves mobilising against Germans instead of Turks. The threat of economic downturn only increases the threat.

RUPERT CORNWELL

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Spanish councillor Miguel Angel Blanco, killed in 1997

ter they wrought was far greater: 800 dead in the case of the Basques, some 3,000 in all in Ireland if republican and loyalist atrocities are combined. The nationalists' targets were across the board: local and national politicians, policemen, soldiers and innocent civilians.

But for the terrorists in Italy and Germany, and to a far lesser extent France, the mayhem was on a much smaller scale. Its driving force was perverted ideology, driven by frustration at ossified, unrepresentative and exclusive political systems, which, they reasoned, could only be brought down by political violence.

In the case of the far right in Italy, whose deadliest deeds were the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombing in Milan, and the Bologna train station massacre of 1980 – the deadliest single terrorist act in modern Italian history in which more than 80 people died – the theory was that random mass violence would create an irresistible clamour for the ultra-authoritarian regime they wanted.

The logic of the left took the madness a stage further. Their attacks were directed against individuals – usually bankers, generals, or politicians – as symbols of a despised system. These murders too aimed to provoke a crackdown. But re-

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# Gagging threat to Russian media

ONE OF the few conspicuous accomplishments of Boris Yeltsin's rule - a vibrant and largely free media - is now under threat, caught in the pincers of economic disaster and an official clamp-down.

BY PHIL REEVES  
in Moscow

Russia's new prime minister, Yevgeny Primakov, has banned his officials from talking to journalists without permission, prompting protests that he is moving towards censorship.

The Russian Union of Journalists has written to the premier, who controlled information tightly while he was foreign minister. "Attempts to use the present situation to restore the idea of censorship is the height of cynicism," the letter states.

The government, which argues that the restrictions are temporary, appears to be trying to protect newly appointed officials amid turmoil, and to lessen the risk that an ill-judged remark will spark panic. They must have clearance from Mr Primakov's chief-of-staff, Admiral Yuri Zubakov, a veteran of the Soviet foreign intelligence service.

Some Russian journalists, remembering Soviet censorship only too well, remain suspicious, despite assurances from the premier that he is "a staunch supporter of freedom of speech and of the independence of mass media organs".

Mr Primakov pointed out that he was a newspaper correspondent for more than a decade. As he worked for *Pravda*, the official organ of the Communist Party - which worked closely with the KGB - few are reassured.

Although Mr Yeltsin introduced short-term censorship during the 1993 crisis, and his

advisers brazenly manipulated the media during his 1996 re-election campaign, he has presided over the evolution of a free media.

But the political landscape has altered significantly in the last month. The country's weight has shifted from the Kremlin, and its enfeebled occupant, and towards the Communist-dominated State Duma, which is packed with tub-thumpers who thrill at the thought of the censor's pen.

There are fears that the new premier will act on demands to introduce lasting restrictions.

The Communists have been clamouring for the media to be overseen by state supervisors. *Echo Moskvi* radio station, a bastion of free speech and energetic news reporting, has said it will challenge official efforts to gag it. "This is a dangerous signal," its editor-in-chief, Alexei Venediktov, told *Kommersant* newspaper, referring to the clampdown. "We do not exclude pursuing the issue through the courts."

But the Russian media faces a greater and more immediate threat from another quarter. Most of the commercial press is owned by a handful of oligarchs, who use it to advance their political interests and fight their business battles.

The same moguls have banks, now fighting for their survival after the government's debt default and devaluation. The paralysis of the economy is fast eating at their media holdings. A once-booming advertising market has halved in weeks. Scores of agencies that



Changed days for newspaper readers in Russia after the press flourished in freedom under Boris Yeltsin. The writing may be on the wall owing to the threat of censorship under the new prime minister

grew up in Moscow in the past few years have seen their business abruptly dry.

The retailers of luxury imported goods have stopped shipping in supplies because they are not being paid by distributors. An official from Russian Advertisers Association has forecast a fall in overall advertising spending from \$2b this year to a feeble \$10m in 1999.

Moscow journalists who were last year commanding \$5,000-a-month triches caused by a shortage of talented writers - now face fast-shrinking pay packets. Even corrupt hacks - who pocket bribes for favourable articles - are expecting leaner times.

Although the oligarchs will protect their media mouthpieces for as long as they can, some closures and lay-offs are a certainty. In fact, one of Moscow's 13 daily papers has already been toppled. The year-old

*Russkiy Telegraf* is merging with *Izvestia*, the former Soviet government newspaper. Founded in 1917, *Izvestia* has seen a Soviet-era circulation of 10m shrink to under 600,000, and is thought to be only breaking even. Others are cutting frantically. The popular weekly *Organyok* magazine said yesterday it was reducing staff by 10 per cent, and paying journalists less.

The small high-quality English-language *Moscow Times* has shrunk noticeably.

None of this bodes well for the health of Russia's political system. Masha Gessen, chief reporter of *Izvestia* magazine, has predicted that the next election "will be filtered through the impoverished prism of state television and one or two surviving newspapers". That is not exactly fertile soil for a democratic contest.

Boris, the Kremlin's kingmaker, *Review*, page 8

## Ad campaign lures Jews

ISRAEL IS preparing a no-expense-spared campaign to persuade hundreds of thousands of Jews in Russia to emigrate to Israel.

The Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, in a pre-Jewish New Year interview with the *Jewish Chronicle*, said he intended to make all necessary funds available for this task.

Mr Netanyahu said the economic turmoil engulfing Russia had presented Israel with a "unique" opportunity to revive large-scale migration from the former Soviet Union.

He said Israel was taking the initiative rather than tactfully waiting for the Jews to get out. A ministerial committee was already busy drafting pro-

BY ERIC SILVER  
in Jerusalem

grammes. Mr Netanyahu said: "We decided that any programmes recommended by the cabinet to induce, promote, and encourage massive immigration will receive all the funding they require, budgetary constraints notwithstanding."

"The reason is simple. It's what we are here for: the ingathering of the exiles. Having renewed Jewish sovereignty in the land of the Jews, we want to bring Jews to Eretz Yisrael."

The Israeli leader dismissed fears that Russia's new prime minister, Yevgeny Primakov, a Middle East expert with an "Arabist" reputation, would

turn Russian policy against Israel. He said the two countries had an excellent relationship, except for one problem.

"We expect Russia to take action against the leakage of Russian technology, ballistic, nuclear and other technology, to Iran and other such regimes. Israel and Russia have a common interest to see the development of peace in our region."

Mr Netanyahu also said he was determined to move ahead with additional Israel redeployments on the West Bank, so long as the Palestinians kept to their side of the deal.

He said that Israel would be prepared to withdraw from a further 13 per cent of the territory - in three phases over three months.

## Angolan bandits ambush UN aid convoy

BY MARY BRAID  
in Johannesburg

A CONVOY of 16 United Nations trucks was ambushed by armed bandits in northern Angola and UN escorts returned fire, the UN said yesterday. Three people were injured, though not seriously.

The convoy, consisting of six trucks from the UN military observer mission and 10 trucks from the World Food Programme, came under fire on Wednesday about 12 miles north of Luanda, in the north of the country. Indian soldiers escorting the convoy returned fire, the UN said. Three local employees of a contractor were injured, though not seriously.

The UN has been trying to implement a 1994 peace accord between the government and the former rebel movement Unita, in the face of renewed fighting between the two sides. Unita, a Portuguese acronym for the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, fought a civil war with the government for nearly two decades after Angola won independence from Portugal in 1975.

A UN-mediated 1994 accord, called the Lusaka Protocol, ended the fighting, but the UN says Unita has resisted honouring it, particularly by refusing to hand over four key territories and demobilise its troops. The Angolan army, meanwhile, has said that it is determined to dislodge Unita from highland strongholds that it has refused to surrender.

Unita will be ousted from the last four central towns it holds "as soon as possible", Higinio Carneiro, a government minister, told reporters earlier this week. "We can do it peacefully or with violence."

So far, Unita has relinquished control of most of the 50 per cent of the country which it held before the deal. But the rebel group has accused the government of committing human rights abuses against its supporters in the areas that it has already relinquished.

## URGENT FLOODS APPEAL.

This year, monsoon rains have wrought havoc throughout much of Asia. Thousands of villages have been washed away in Nepal and India. 14 million have been left homeless in China.

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# Swedes head for coalition

BY KATHERINE BUTLER

**OLD-STYLE** welfare Socialists and Euro-sceptics look likely to regain influence in Sweden after the general election this Sunday, dominated by resentment over cuts to health, education and welfare spending.

The Social Democrat Prime Minister, Goran Persson, leader of a party that has governed Sweden for most of this century, is confident he will retain his grip on power and has pencilled in talks with Tony Blair and US President Bill Clinton in New York on Sunday on the SDF-planned "third way" to prosperity and jobs.

The voters, however, apparently nostalgic for the 1960s model of a welfare state, which also gave Sweden the highest taxes in the western world, seem determined to give the Social Democrats their worst result at the polls in years.

Opinion polls yesterday gave the Social Democrats 35.6 per cent of the vote, an unprecedentedly low figure for a party whose members used to feel alarmed if support sank below 50 per cent.

While such an outcome may not drive Mr Persson on to the opposition benches, it would push him into an uncomfortable coalition with anti-European Union factions on the left.

The options include the Left

Party, drawn from the remains of the old Swedish Communists and now poised to become the third biggest party in parliament, and the Greens who are equally hostile to the single European currency. The latest polls suggested the former Communists would win 12.7 per cent of the vote, double their showing at the last election.

If such forecasts prove accurate and Mr Persson's party is reduced to controlling just over one-third of the seats in parliament, he will have no choice but to contemplate an SDF-Left-Green alliance.

Linking with the former Communists will force Mr Persson to do business with the Left Party leader Gudrun Schyman, a self-confessed alcoholic, militant feminist and a deeply unpalatable prospect for many Social Democrats. Ms Schyman's platform includes 100 per cent employment, withdrawal from Europe and a return to what she calls "values".

"This election is not only about money it is also about what values we should have in our society. There is a need in Sweden for this kind of discussion," Ms Schyman said yesterday, explaining her party's strong showing in the polls.

She was anxious to play down differences with the Social Democrats over how the public finances would be managed but her party would inevitably want to relax the iron grip on spending Mr Persson has been exerting.

Both the Left Party and the Greens want Sweden to leave the EU. They want that to happen immediately if a referendum on joining the Euro is defeated. Sweden, with Britain, Denmark and Greece, has ruled out membership at the launch of the Euro next year because public opinion is so averse even though the economy is in strong shape.

Sweden is one of the EU's youngest members, having joined in 1995. But as far as most Swedes are concerned, divorce might not be a bad idea. The latest opinion poll from the European Commission published yesterday confirms Swedes as the most reluctant members of the club, with only 32 per cent in favour of it, lower even than Denmark or Britain.

The conservative and pro-Europe Moderate Party, led by the popular former Prime Minister and EU envoy to Bosnia Carl Bildt, has recently called for the establishment of a timetable for when and how Sweden might join the euro.



Left Party leader Gudrun Schyman at a meeting in Stockholm yesterday EPA

## Growing British support for single currency

BY STEPHEN CASTLE  
in Brussels

**OPPOSITION** TO the European single currency in Britain has fallen below 50 per cent, according to an official EU survey. Those hostile to the euro now make up 49 per cent of the population, a drop of 10 per cent since the last similar survey.

More than one-third of those questioned in the UK now back EMU, an increase of 5 per cent, with "don't knows" rising by the same margin to 17 per cent. The

trend in Britain reflects growing support for the project throughout Europe. Within the EU it is now backed by 60 per cent, a nine-point increase from the survey six months ago. Among the 11 countries that will participate in the launch in January next year, that figure rises to 66 per cent. The find-

ings, welcomed yesterday by the European Commission, will hearten advocates of EMU ahead of the launch of a big public information campaign in Britain next month.

They also call into question the tactics of William Hague, leader of the opposition, in balloting his party members in support of a policy of ruling out membership for the lifetime of the next parliament. The Eu-

ropean Commission has been buoyed by the success of the Euro-zone currencies in withstanding the economic shocks from the Far East and Russia.

Approval ratings for the euro are at their highest level since the survey began in 1993. Support is strongest in Italy at 83 per cent, but in Austria, Finland and Germany backing for the project now exceeds 50 per cent for the first time. The UK

and Denmark have the fewest active proponents of the monetary union, at just more than one third.

In Denmark 57 per cent are hostile to EMU and less than 10 per cent say they don't know.

A thousand people were questioned in Great Britain and 300 in Northern Ireland as part of the bi-annual survey, which revealed Britons to be among the most ignorant peo-

ple in Europe about EMU. Only 37 per cent know the name of the currency, as opposed to 95 per cent in France and 73 per cent in Sweden. The survey also reflects poorly on the British government's attempts to project a positive image of Europe during its six-month presidency of the EU, which ended in June. Just over one-third of the population (36 per cent) was aware of the presidency.

## Cafe society - with fries

EUROPEAN TIMES  
VIENNA

**IT COULD** be a scene anywhere in one of central Europe's famous cafes: those homes from home for generations of writers, artists and philosophers discussing life, love and politics over a lengthy coffee, cigarette in hand.

The hiss of another espresso trickling down and the clatter of cup on saucer punctuate the lively background chatter, while plumes of tobacco smoke swirl upward towards the ceiling.

A few feet away a crowd of patrons examines the glorious array of cakes in a glass display case - the essential accompaniment to a morning in Mittel Europa.

Except this is not a scene in Vienna's famed Cafe Central, or Gerbeaud in Budapest, those Habsburg-era meeting places that still breathe the air of the Austro-Hungarian belle époque.

Instead this latest addition to Vienna's coffee houses has been opened by McDonald's. McCafe is the latest venture of the fast-food giant, with two branches, one on Mariahilfer strasse in downtown Vienna, the other in the Tyrol.

Purists may scoff at the idea of a cafe attached to a hamburger joint, for McCafe serves Big Macs as well as coffee and cakes, but in the fast-living Nineties, when few have time to laze away the hours, McCafe is for many a perfect compromise.

"McCafe is something new for Vienna. It appeals to different kinds of people. Students who would not go to an old-style coffee house come here," said Harald Fasching, deputy manager. Certainly the decor is livelier and brighter than in

many classic coffee houses. The walls are light blue and yellow, while a black marble bar stretches across the floor. But, as tradition demands, the day's newspapers and a selection of magazines are freely available.

McCafe is the latest addition to the revival of cafe life across central Europe. In Prague the famed riverside Cafe Slavia, formerly a favourite haunt of dissident writers such as the Czech President Vaclav Havel, and the secret policemen assigned to watch them, has reopened in a blaze of chrome and marble after being closed for years.

In Budapest the centre of cafe life is now based around Franz Liszt square, by the music academy and the nearby stretch of theatres. The square is home to three cafes and more are planned.

At the turn of the century Budapest boasted more than 300. "Cafe life at the turn of the century was a whole social scene, a melting pot for those who had no place to work or anywhere decent to live, so it was a hotbed of free thinking full of poets, writers and artists," said Andras Torok, author of *Budapest: A Critical Guide*.

Communism put an end to that. The workers in the region's capitals took their coffee standing up, in espresso bars. By 1989, when Communism collapsed, Budapest had fewer than a dozen proper cafes.

Now the city awaits the planned reopening of the Central coffee house, once one of the architectural wonders of the Habsburg empire, in October 1999.

ADAM LEBOR

VOLVO

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# BUSINESS

## BRIEFING

### Citigroup cuts 8,000 jobs

CITIGROUP, the banking giant to be formed out of the \$60bn (£36bn) merger between Citicorp and Travelers, the parent group of Salomon Smith Barney, is planning to cut 8,000 jobs or 5 per cent of its worldwide staff this year with further cuts to follow.

The merger, agreed in April, has yet to be formally approved. Both banks have seen their shares tumble as a result of the global financial turmoil, slashing the value of the merger. A spokesman for Citicorp was quoted as saying that the figures were "directionally accurate".

### BP sets 2010 emissions target



BRITISH PETROLEUM has set itself a target of cutting its greenhouse gas emissions by 10 per cent from 1990 levels by 2010. The targets were to be announced today at Yale School of Management in the US by the BP chairman, Sir John Browne (left).

The reduction will be achieved by cutting carbon dioxide emissions through use of new technology, energy efficiency and elimination of flaring from oil and gas fields. BP is also launching a system of trading in pollution permits across the group, initially involving 12 of its 90 units. The company, which is merging with Amoco of the US, has already pulled out of the Global Climate Change Coalition, a US-dominated lobby group set up to campaign against the environmental targets agreed at last year's Kyoto summit.

### Leeds' new boardroom signing

LEEDS SPORTING, which owns Leeds United Football Club, yesterday beefed up its board by appointing Richard North, finance director of Bass, as a non-executive director. He joins Asda chief executive Allan Leighton, who joined the board last month. The appointments help fill the gap left by Chris Akers, Leeds' chief executive, who is leaving the company. Unlike Mr Leighton, Mr North is not a Leeds supporter, although he said he "has always been a soccer fan".

Leeds Sporting yesterday said it was in discussions with a number of possible partners about developing its hotel and leisure complex, for which it should receive planning permission later this month. It is also considering setting up a Yorkshire-based sports and entertainment television channel.

Sliding stock markets and grim news on profits add to fears of economic slowdown

## World shares plunge again

THE GLOBAL stock market slide resumed yesterday after warnings of global recession and grim corporate news on both sides of the Atlantic added to investors' disappointment at US Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan's failure to confirm an early interest-rate cut.

BY ANDREW GARFIELD  
Financial Editor

Sentiment was also hit by news that the International Monetary Fund is cutting its world growth forecast this year to 2 per cent in response to the global financial turmoil.

The London-based Economist Intelligence Unit downgraded its world growth forecast in the light of the Russian financial collapse to 2.1 per cent this year and 2.4 per cent next year, the weakest outlook for the world economy since

1981/82. It amounts to a warning that there is a significant risk of global recession.

New York's Dow Jones stock index, which on Wednesday had been more preoccupied with the fate of President Bill Clinton than the implications of Mr Greenspan's remarks, yesterday opened 200 points down at 7,886.

In Europe it was Paris and Frankfurt which fared worst, registering falls of 5 per cent. In Paris the weak dollar, coupled with profits warnings from French telecommunications

giant Alcatel - a key local index constituent - stoked worries about exporters' ability to maintain earnings in fast-contracting markets.

In the City the FTSE 100 closed down 158 points at 5,132.9, a fall of 3 per cent. Tokyo and Hong Kong also suffered severe falls yesterday.

"What we have been seeing is a market in freefall," said Nick Stevenson, European strategist at Paribas. "All the talk of European corporate restructuring and the growth of the equity culture in Europe was the

icing on the cake. But where is the cake?"

Markets were again preoccupied with the fate of Brazil, where the key stock market index, the Bovespa, was showing a fall of 7.69 per cent. Optimism earlier in the week that the combination of an IMF bailout and American interest rate cut would stave off collapse was dwindling fast.

According to the EIU, "a collapse in Brazil would bring the rest of Latin America down with it, in effect eliminating demand for a further 18 per

cent of US exports". It points out that the emerging markets crisis has already affected 32 per cent of US exports.

Nick Stamenkovic of Bank Austria says survey data released yesterday by the Philadelphia Federal Reserve shows that some parts of the US economy are already being affected. US rates could still fall, albeit later than the market hoped, said Mr Stamenkovic. But he warned: "Even if the Fed provides some easing it will only provide temporary relief for the equity markets."

## Dismay at RMC and Alcatel warnings

INVESTORS WERE rattled by a renewed bout of gloomy corporate news yesterday as Alcatel Alsthom, the French telecommunications equipment giant, and concrete group RMC issued profit warnings while John Lewis reported its first profit fall for five years.

BY PETER THAL LAESEN  
AND FRANCESCO GUERRERA

The steady flow of bad news - which has now spread across all sectors of the economy - has prompted analysts to slash their profit forecasts across the board.

Some equity strategists now expect average UK company earnings not to grow at all next year.

One observer said investors were now looking for any excuse to sell their shares. "Anybody that comes out with any news that isn't absolutely fabulous is treated with great suspicion," he said. "This market is in no mood for what it sees as failure."

Alcatel produced the shock of the day. The French giant - which was one of the best-performing European stocks of last year - stunned investors with a warning that the economic crisis in Asia and Russia, combined with spending cuts by large European telephone companies, meant 1998 profits would not meet market expectations.

On the Paris bourse, trading in Alcatel was suspended seven times as the shares plunged. They eventually closed down 38 per cent at 571 francs.

Alcatel said increased competition for customers was forcing large telecom groups such as Deutsche Telekom and Telefonica to cut back on spending. Meanwhile, sales to the Far East and Russia had been hit

by the economic downturn. The warning knocked shares in other telecom equipment suppliers including GEC, which dropped 8 per cent at 424p. Shares in European suppliers such as Siemens, Nokia and Ericsson also slipped.

Meanwhile, shares in RMC, the building materials group, crashed to a five-year low after the world's largest producer of ready-mix concrete warned of a profit slowdown in its two major markets.

The company said that a slump in demand in Germany and a slowdown in the UK in the second half of the year will have a negative impact on its 1998 profits.

Peter Young, the chief executive of RMC, said the dire

state of the construction industry in the former East Germany was set to deteriorate further as the post-reunification building boom ground to a halt.

The bearish comments prompted City analysts to slash their profit forecast for 1998 by up to 10 per cent to around £285m from around £310m.

The downgrades were accompanied by a bout of selling that wiped more than £170m from the company's market value.

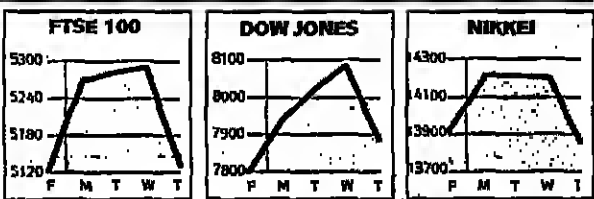
Shares in RMC, which will drop out of the FTSE-100 on Monday, closed 68p lower, at 632p. Shares in fellow building materials producer Blue Circle, due to report its results today, fell.

Retail gloom, page 23



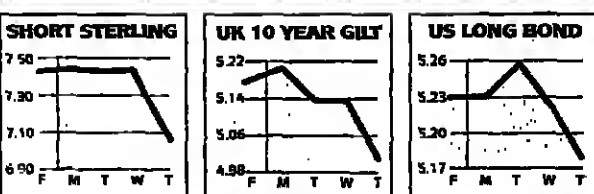
Young: Building industry in Germany is slowing

## STOCK MARKETS



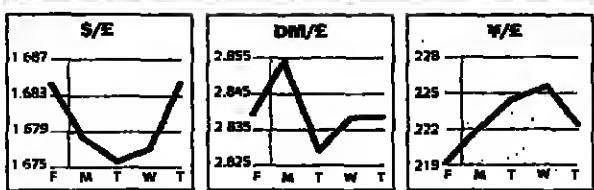
Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5132.90	-158.80	-3.00	6183.70	4382.80	3.80
FTSE 250	4687.20	-71.40	-1.50	5970.90	4428.30	4.40
FTSE 350	2460.10	-69.10	-2.73	2969.10	2141.80	3.91
FTSE All Share	2386.94	-64.72	-2.64	2886.52	2106.59	3.91
FTSE SmallCap	2072.20	-19.60	-0.94	2799.60	2044.80	4.01
FTSE EuroStoxx	1158.40	-10.90	-0.93	1517.10	1140.20	4.44
FTSE AIM	874.10	-12.00	-1.35	1146.90	862.80	1.48
FTSE EBLCC 100	854.15	-44.35	-5.19			
Dow Jones	7876.09	-214.72	-2.69	9367.84	6971.32	1.90
Nikkei	13559.14	-338.56	-2.39	18439.76	13664.74	1.10
Hong Kong	7576.57	-284.11	-3.61	15242.65	6544.79	5.40
Dax	4669.51	-188.46	-3.98	6217.83	3487.24	3.44

## INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	2 year	5 year	10 year	Yr. Chg.
UK	7.43	0.17	7.07	-0.37	5.01	-1.70	4.73
US	5.50	-0.22	5.28	-0.70	4.78	-1.32	5.18
Japan	0.41	-0.16	0.46	-0.18	0.86	-1.32	1.36
Germany	3.48	0.18	3.57	-0.13	3.96	-1.61	4.85

## CURRENCIES



Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	2 year	5 year	10 year	Yr. Chg.
Dollar	1.6845	+0.81c	1.6000				0.6250
Mark	2.8389	+0.08pf	2.8320				1.7720
Yen	222.43	-44.01	193.72				120.88
£ index	102.60	+0.00	99.50				105.10

## OTHER INDICATORS

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	2 year	5 year	10 year	Yr. Chg.
Brent Oil (\$)	13.02	0.40	18.04				112.48
Gold (\$)	290.75	2.70	320.25				158.47
Silver (\$)	4.94	0.01	4.59				7.00

Source: Bloomberg

## TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.7531	Mexican (nuevo peso)	16.04
Austria (schillings)	19.34	Netherlands (guilder)	3.1023
Belgium (franc)	56.83	New Zealand (\$)	3.1680
Canada (\$)	2.4848	Norway (krone)	12.28
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8118	Portugal (escudo)	279.08
Denmark (krone)	10.54	Saudi Arabia (riyal)	6.1180
Finland (markka)	8.4214	Singapore (\$)	2.7587
France (franc)	9.2139	Spain (peseta)	232.93
Germany (mark)	2.7607	South Africa (rand)	9.7171
Greece (drachma)	471.46	Sweden (krona)	12.82
Hong Kong (\$)	12.63	Switzerland (franc)	2.2760
Ireland (pound)	1.0975	Thailand (baht)	62.24
India (rupee)	65.61	Turkey (lira)	446.64
Israel (shekel)	5.9397	USA (\$)	1.6419
Italy (lira)	2727		
Japan (yen)	221.65		
Malaysia (ringgit)	6.1245		
Malta (lira)	0.6123		

Rates for information purposes only  
Source: Thomas Cook



John Weston, BAE chief executive (left), and finance director George Rose reported a 24 per cent profit rise

## Oil slump costs BAE £500m

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

BRITISH AEROSPACE is suffering a shortfall of £2.4m a day on payments under the giant Al Yamamah arms contract with Saudi Arabia because of the collapse in oil prices, it emerged yesterday.

The fall in oil prices from \$19 a barrel last year to \$12 is estimated to have caused a cash outflow of about £500m in BAE's finances in the first half.

Fears over the outflow prompted a 12 per cent fall in BAE shares. BAE posted a net cash outflow of £518m and disclosed that its defence division had negative cash flow of £506m.

The shortfall arises because the Tornado fighter jets ordered by the Saudis through the Al Yamamah deal are paid for with 600,000 barrels of oil a day. The oil is traded through Rotterdam and the cash proceeds are passed to BAE through the British Government.

Sir Dick Evans, the BAE chairman, sought to reassure investors that the shortfall was temporary and that the Saudis would honour the outstanding sums due under the contract, denominated in sterling.

John Weston, BAE's chief executive, added that the cash position would be "reversed with a substantial customer payment" in the next future.

He was speaking as BAE reported a 24 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £344m and said it would like to see the US defence giant, Lockheed, take a stake in the Airbus programme.

BAE also said it was continuing to hold discussions with Daimler-Benz Aerospace, one of its Airbus partners, about a link or merger.

Mr Weston said he was keen to agree a transatlantic al-

liance, but this would probably have to wait until the creation of a single European aerospace and defence company had been completed. As an interim step Lockheed could be invited to join Airbus - due to convert to a single corporate entity next year - probably as a partner on the \$10bn super-Jumbo project.

BAE also continues to seek an overseas partner for its troubled Royal Ordnance ammunition business.

Operating profits from defence rose to £308m and the group order book increased to a record £24bn.

## Murdoch plays for Italian TV and soccer

BY ANNE HANLEY  
in Rome

RUPERT MURDOCH'S News Corporation was locked in talks last night to purchase a stake of around 40 per cent in Telecom Italia's digital television venture, Stream, sources close to the negotiations said.

Mr Murdoch was reportedly offering up to \$160m for the stake in the loss-making Stream, which has 80,000 subscribers.

The success of the negotiations, sources said, hinged on approval of the deal from the state broadcaster RAI.

Earlier this year RAI reached an outline accord for cooperation with Stream in the digital television sector.

Mr Murdoch's negotiations with Telecom Italia entered their final stretch amid persistent rumours that the News Corporation chief will also lodge a bid for pay-television rights to all Italian Serie A and B soccer league matches.

According to local press reports, Mr Murdoch is prepared to put up £4.3bn (£1.4bn) to secure these rights for six seasons.

At a meeting of the Italian Football League yesterday League Chairman Franco Carraro said: "No written or verbal offers from Mr Murdoch were received."

"However, the information I have to hand leads me to believe that things are moving fast."

Mr Carraro said any forthcoming bids to compete with Telepiù - which has reached a £700m deal to transmit home matches played by

Juventus, AC Milan, Inter and Napoli from 1999 to 2005 - would be welcome.

Telepiù is currently Italy's only broadcaster of encrypted soccer games, with 360,000 subscribers to its digital channels.

Mr Murdoch has been seeking to enter the flourishing Italian television market for more than three years.

As recently as 2 September Mr Murdoch was in Italy to discuss a pan-European bailout plan for the ailing German media group, Kirch, with Silvio Berlusconi, the former prime minister and the majority shareholder of Italy's largest private broadcaster, Mediaset SpA.

But with his efforts looking increasingly likely to be crowned with success yesterday, the hostility that Mr Murdoch has always aroused in Italy came to the fore.

Telecom Italia shares plunged 5.93 per cent on the Milan Stock Exchange, as Telecommunications under-secretary Vincenzo Vita warned that "once he has entered the digital television field, Mr Murdoch will certainly not limit his interests to football."

"I don't want to demonise the man, but he really worries me."

## AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

### LONDON

EQUITIES FELL sharply although closing above their lowest levels. Footsie was cut 158.8 points to 5,132.9 in active trading.

Dismal trading news, profit downgrades and the seeming end of any hope of a concerted G7 cut in interest rates to fight recessionary influences prompted the latest set back.

Among blue chips British Aerospace was lowered on fears its cash flow from Saudi Arabia may be delayed and Bass weakened on a rush of profit downgrades.

Derek Pain, page 25

### NEW YORK

STOCKS WERE sharply lower at midday as a worldwide equity rout arrived in New York. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 218 points or 2.7 per cent at 7,871. All 30 stocks in the average were in the red.

Analysts said European and Asian markets slipped overnight after the US Federal Reserve chairman, Alan Greenspan, failed to signal a co-ordinated interest rate cut. This sent stocks lower on Wednesday until a late rally, but yesterday investors reacted again to the gloomy outlook.

### TOKYO

THE BENCHMARK Nikkei 225 index fell to a 12-and-a-half-year low, peaking declines in Hong Kong and Singapore, amid concern other big developers' earnings will tumble as housing demand slides. The benchmark Nikkei 225 stock index fell 338.56 points, or 2.38 per cent, to 13,859.14, the lowest since February 1986.

Concern that local governments will not be able to invest in public works also weighed on property shares. The Tokyo metropolitan government will declare a state of emergency next month.

### FRANKFURT

THE BENCHMARK DAX Xetra index fell 243.15 points, or 4.99 per cent, to 4,626.02 as every one of the 30 constituent shares fell.

SAP led the decline with a 13 per cent fall after reports that its US rival, Oracle, aims to overtake SAP as the world's largest maker of business management software within five years. Europe's leading maker of sports shoes, Adidas-Salomon, slumped 12 per cent on fears that growth will suffer as the US economy slows. Adidas generates 40 per cent of sales outside Europe.

### SAO PAULO

SHARE PRICES were sharply lower in late morning trade as investors took profits on falls in the US market and were disappointed at US reluctance to cut interest rates. The Bovespa index fell 507 points, or 7.52 per cent, to 6,251. Trade had earlier been suspended for 30 minutes after the index fell 10 per cent.

Stocks were hit by the outflow of dollars on Tuesday, which reached \$580m by 7:15pm, dealers said. But reports in London that the Brazilian government may devalue the real were discounted.



# Plucky Vickers in search of a future

AS the man who originally negotiated the Al Yamamah arms-for-oil deal, Sir Colin Chandler could afford a wry smile yesterday at the news that the collapse in oil prices is draining £2.4m a day from British Aerospace's cash balances.

But that is all he has to grin about. The interruption in BAE's cash flows is a temporary hiccup. The Saudis will eventually have to make it good with a one-off payment to BAE, unless they want a diplomatic row that would make the death of a Princess affair look like a Sunday picnic.

By contrast, Vickers' problems in defence look ominously intractable, and much longer-term in nature. Sir Colin grasped part of the nettle yesterday by closing the Leeds tank factory and, surprise, surprise, sparing its sister plant in Newcastle. Nothing to do with it being on the doorstep of Tony Blair's constituency, you understand.

But no tank manufacturer is an island and Vickers looks uncomfortably isolated as the carve-up of Europe's armoured vehicles industry gathers pace. It could train its sights on Alvis, which joined forces with GKN this week, and



## OUTLOOK

launch a knock-out bid. That would be one way of getting its hands on Alvis's Swedish order book.

But it would bring Sir Colin no nearer the real prize, which is a share in the £300 "battled field" contract that Vickers was beaten to by GKN. With Alvis now on board, as well as GKN's German and French partners, there is a limit to how many more manufacturers can join the party.

The alternative alliance partners do not look very enticing. Giat of France has been touted as a potential bride. But it employs 4,000 people to produce the same number of tanks that Vickers will be able to make with a tenth of the work-

force once Leeds shuts. Even if Sir Colin could isolate Vickers from the social costs that French industry is saddled with, it still looks like a marriage of convenience.

Sir Colin says pluckily that there is £250m worth of tank business out there and Vickers can win its fair share. But unless Vickers finds a strategy, and quickly, then tanks, like Rolls-Royce Motor Cars before the Germans came along, may begin to resemble another one of those businesses with the ability to shoot down the whole group.

## Rank

JUST as it seemed things could get no worse for Rank, the leisure conglomerate, they just did. The profit warning from Bass has added fresh momentum to the downward plunge in a share price that seems to know no bottom. Since Andrew Teare, Rank's beleaguered chief executive, arrived in April 1996, the shares have halved in value, and on Monday this once famous corporate name suffers the ignominy of being kicked out of the FTSE 100 index, probably for good.

If there was ever the slightest

doubt that Rank seriously overpaid for the Uncle Tom Cobleigh pub chain, the Bass profits warning has laid it to rest. Uncle Tom Cobleigh is heavily weighted to precisely the same areas of the country Bass identified as being most hit by what it called "a general softening of consumer demand".

Presumably that same softening, added to the dreadful summer weather, will be hitting Rank's plethora of other businesses too, from Butlins and Mecca to Odeon cinemas and Hard Rock cafes. If this were an engineering company, then the underperformance of the company's business and share price would be understandable, but Rank is in what is meant to be a growth industry, leisure.

Mr Teare, a relaxed and jovial man, is in the habit of saying that life's too short to lose sleep over such matters, but surely even he must now be feeling the heat, even if his businesses are not. He's judged to have done the right thing in getting out of Rank Xerox, but the Uncle Tom Cobleigh acquisition only seemed to add to the group's perceived weakness as a rag bag of unconnected leisure interests. Though Mr Teare has been in-

vesting heavily in his core brands, he seems to have failed to stamp a cohesive strategy and culture on the group. Much of the problem is not down to Mr Teare as such, for he inherited a rotten situation. The City never knew the half of it, and a large part of Mr Teare's job since has been to disillusion investors.

The City is nonetheless an unforgiving place and the wolves are already at his door. Mr Teare needs to find a way of restoring value to shareholders in double quick time, or to use the time honoured expression, he'll find someone else doing it for him. Radical action is called for. Breakup and demerger must be put firmly back at the top of the agenda.

## Barclays

THERE CAN be few more telling illustrations of the present "flight to safety" among investors than the news that Abbey National overtook Barclays in terms of stock market value earlier this week, albeit briefly. This despite the fact that Barclays is set to make around a third more in profits than Abbey this year, even after its £250m Russian dis-

aster. Never mind that Martin Taylor's mea culpa over the bank's Russian exposure has been generally welcomed by analysts in the City as a refreshingly honest piece of realism. Never mind also that Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and SBC Warburg all rate the stock a screaming buy. Despite it all, the fund managers just do not want to know. They'd rather have safe as houses Abbey National, and other former building societies, in their portfolios than recession exposed Barclays.

The logic of this position is not hard to grasp, though it does at this juncture look more than a trifle exaggerated. A mortgage book is high quality, high margin lending which even in a recession tends to remain remarkably immune to bad debt experience. Barclays by contrast, is bound to see a very considerable pick up in bad debts in the event of a recession, not withstanding the risk averse credit controls Mr Taylor claims to have put in place during the good times. The Russian provision is just a foretaste of what's to come, say the jeremiahs.

Like most chief executives confronted by a plummeting share price, Mr Taylor is perplexed and

just a little angered by the judgement of markets. There'll have to be a quite serious recession to justify this reversal in fortunes. And even though things are beginning to look worse by the day, no credible forecaster is yet predicting an outright recession at all.

Unfortunately, financial markets are driven as much by sentiment as rational analysis, and undervalued though Barclays might now be on conventional measures, nobody's in the mood for buying. About the only people who see value in the market as it stands are the chief executives themselves. Companies as diverse as NatWest and BTR bought back shares yesterday. They are just the tip of the iceberg. Billions of pounds have been spent on share buybacks so far this year. It can reasonably be argued that without the buyback pro, the market would be even lower.

Let's hope that the judgement of chief executives proves better than that of ordinary investors, for if they are wrong and there really is a worldwide recession on the way, there are going to be an awful lot of undercapitalised companies out there by the time they realise the bear market is for real.

## IN BRIEF

### Trinity shares fall on warning

SHARES IN Trinity fell to a year's low after the regional newspaper group warned that second-half advertising growth had slowed.

Trinity, which yesterday unveiled a 13 per cent rise in pre-tax profits for the six months to June, also revealed it is in advanced talks to sell its US operations. The shares closed down 5p at 434p after Merrill Lynch cut its earnings forecasts, citing the expectation of a slowdown in advertising and the lack of recent acquisitions.

### CRS names chief

CO-OPERATIVE Retail Services, the Rochdale-based branch of the Co-op movement, has named Andy Meehan as its new chief executive.

Mr Meehan, 43, is now managing director of Storehouse International, the overseas franchising business of the Bhs and Mothercare retailer. He will join in November, succeeding Harry Moore who is retiring. Mr Meehan is a chartered accountant who spent six years with Sears, including spells as finance director of Selfridges and Sears Sports.

### Geest won't bid

GEEST, the chilled food maker, said it had considered a bid for Terranova, the prepared food business to be demerged from Hilldown Holdings, but decided against it because of the "two groups" poor fit. Geest reported flat interim pre-tax profits of £12.7m, affected by a shorter half-year. Underlying profits rose 20 per cent.

### Buoyant Bovis

BOVIS HOMES, the housebuilder demerged from P&O, said it expected the housing market to remain buoyant this year despite the probable economic slowdown. The company reported a 21 per cent rise in interim pre-tax profits to £16.9m despite a fall in completions to 952 from 1,097.

### Cookson buys

COORSON, the specialist engineering group, has bought two American manufacturing firms, Accel and Matrix, for £8.9m and £7.8m in cash respectively. Accel makes specialty cleaning systems for the electronic component packaging and surface mount technology segments of the electronics industry. Matrix makes micron-tolerance precision engineered products.

### Sega's new chip

A MICROCHIP based on Videologic's PowerVR Series 2 technology will be the graphics engine in Sega's new "Naomi" system for arcade game machines. Videologic said yesterday. Videologic said the Sega decision is the second step in PowerVR's three-market cross-platform gaming strategy and confirms the company's entry into arcade games. Videologic shares gained 1p to 59p.

## News Analysis: The City is gearing up for a frantic New Year 'conversion weekend'

# Are you ready for the euro?

BY LEA PATERSON

NEW YEAR in the City is usually a rather quiet affair. Corporate activity grinds to a halt, economic news tends to be thin on the ground, and the streets in and around the Square Mile are deserted.

However, this New Year in the City could be one of the busiest ever. Thousands of staff have been cajoled, bribed and bullied into working over the so-called "conversion weekend" when Europe's common currency, the euro, will be officially launched.

The magnitude of the challenge presented by the "week-end" - which will run from Thursday 31 December to Sunday 3 January - is mind-boggling.

When the markets shut for business on Monday 4 January, these 11 currencies will be replaced by just one. How prepared is the City for this momentous change?

When markets reopen for business on Monday 4 January, these 11 currencies will be replaced by just one. How prepared is the City for this momentous change?

Compared to our European partners, public awareness of the euro in the UK is relatively low. In France, for example, every shop already posts prices in both euros and francs in an attempt to get people thinking in the new currency before its introduction at the retail level in three years' time. In this country, by contrast, many would be pushed even to name all the EMU participants.

The official line is that this lack of public awareness is not replicated in the City. The latest Bank of England quarterly bulletin on the euro - a detailed assessment on City readiness for the change - finds that major financial institutions are confident about their ability to cope with the conversion weekend.

For the smaller City firms, however, things look a little less rosy. John Townsend, who on 1 January becomes the Bank's first Director of Europe, says: "You can be reasonably confident about the main players. But, as in other financial centres, when you look at some of the smaller players you cannot be so sure."



French shops already display euro prices, but in the UK financial institutions are finding it difficult to prepare

John Rushton, euro expert at PA Consulting, also harbours doubts about the readiness of certain City players, both large and small. He said: "We are working with a number of wholesale financial institutions, and we see a wide variability in preparations."

"Many leading institutions have completed their information technology testing and will be undertaking full-scale simulations in October and November. Others, though, have yet to do detailed conversion weekend planning. These people are running out of time," says Mr Rushton.

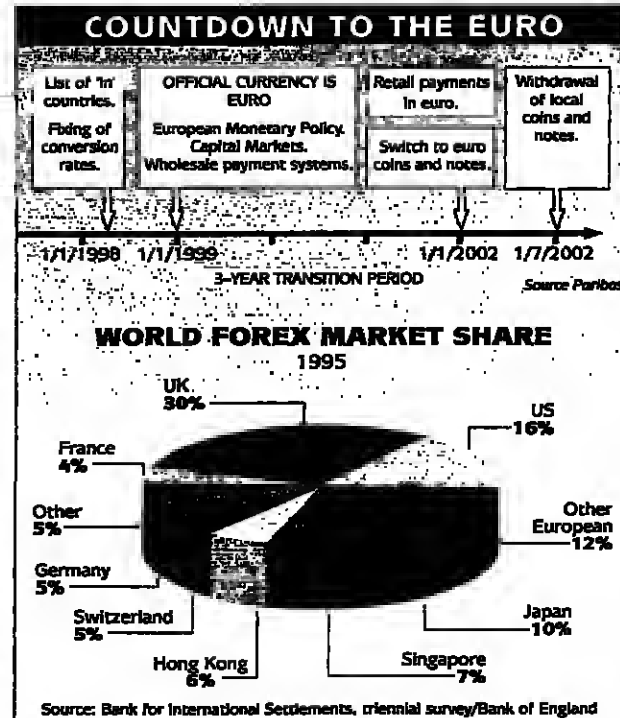
One of the most fundamental difficulties about the conversion weekend preparations is the degree of interdependence between financial institutions. Put simply, it is not enough just to worry about your own company's readiness for the euro; you need everyone else to be ready too.

Mr Rushton says: "The City is a highly interconnected place. Although you should be able to contain many problems within institutions, it's hard to guarantee that a problem in one place won't spread elsewhere." In theory, then, all you need

is one glitch in one system somewhere, and there could be chaos in the financial markets when they reopen for business on Monday 4 January. And when you consider that there will be no full-scale rehearsals involving all market participants prior to the weekend itself - although institutions are expected to carry out their own simulations - it starts to look rather worrying.

Where are problems most likely to occur? In its latest euro bulletin, released yesterday, the Bank of England noted that there were particular concerns in the City about the readiness of information providers, fund managers and non-EU firms. The report reads: "Reference was frequently made [by City firms] to Japanese firms, with some concern that initially they were not sufficiently focused on euro preparations. The concern is now whether sufficient time is left for them to prepare adequately."

These concerns seem to be backed up by a survey released earlier in the week by the National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF). The NAPF said: "Only a quarter of pension scheme administrators sur-



veyed have taken significant action to prepare for the single currency. Half do not see the need for a major exercise before the New Year 1999 conversion weekend." That

statistic is likely to have the better-prepared City players quaking in their boots. So what happens if it does all go wrong? London is a major financial centre - it accounts for



Popperfoto

around a third of global foreign exchange turnover, for example. If the City struggles to cope with the conversion weekend, the ripples will be felt in all the major financial centres.

Many institutions already have contingency plans in place, although according to Mr Rushton, a significant minority have not bothered. And the Bank of England, together with the Financial Services Authority (FSA), is in the process of identifying the main areas where things could go wrong, and will then draw up an appropriate "Plan B".

Most experts believe that the weekend should proceed without too many glitches, but no one really knows for sure. As Mr Townsend at the Bank says: "This is a hugely complicated project, unprecedented in scale and breadth. I am pretty optimistic, but you cannot guarantee that everything will be 100 per cent problem free."

So when it comes round to the New Year in just over three months' time, the City will be holding its breath, crossing its fingers and hoping for the best. There's a chance that even the best-laid plans will go wrong on the night.

## Bank of England appoints Europe Director

BY ANDREW GARFIELD  
Financial Editor

THE BANK of England yesterday appointed its first ever Director of Europe with responsibility for co-ordinating the Bank's relationship with the European Central Bank.

His job will include standing in for the Governor Eddie George at ECB meetings.

The post will be taken by John Townsend, the Bank's deputy director of market operations, who has been spearheading the Bank's discussions about how to respond to the introduction of the single European currency on 1 January.

The move will be seen as a covert admission by the bank of the inevitability of Britain signing up to the euro, despite the Government's insistence on sheltering behind an official policy of "wait-and-see".

It is also likely to be seen in some quarters as a defeat for both Eddie George, the governor, and his deputy Mervyn King, both confirmed Eurosceptics who are believed to have had misgivings about formalising Mr Townsend's role.

Both are said to have been dragging their feet on suggestions that the Bank should set up a permanent presence in Frankfurt to liaise with the European Central Bank.

Mr King said recently about monetary union: "You can get them to the altar on time. But you can't make them marry." The decision to promote Mr Townsend was nevertheless welcomed in the City as a highly sensible move.

Mr Townsend, 51, is a well-respected economist and career Bank of England official. As well as co-ordinating the Bank's own preparations for European Monetary Union, he has been standing in for Mr George at meetings of the European Monetary Institute, the precursor of the ECB, as well as working with City institutions to ensure their preparations for EMU are up to scratch.

Julian Jessop, economist at Nikko Securities, said yesterday that in addition to the ECB's responsibility for monetary policy, there are other areas where the Bank of England would want to have some influence.

These include the Target payments system and the way that minimum reserve requirements are to be imposed on "Euroland".

## Acorn squeezed out of personal computer market

ACORN, THE last remaining British computer manufacturer, yesterday admitted defeat in its battle with larger rivals by deciding to stop developing its range of personal computers.

The Cambridge-based company has scrapped the development of its new Risc 2 computer, effectively allowing the Acorn brand of PCs to with-

er and die. A third of its 175-strong workforce will be made redundant as a result.

Acorn said it would continue to supply and support its existing product range, which includes thousands of PCs in school classrooms around the country. However, experts said

the company's decision not to develop new machines meant the brand would eventually disappear.

The move is part of a restructuring that will see Acorn concentrate on supplying products for the fast-expanding digital television market.

Stan Boland, Acorn's chief executive, said: "Today's an-

nouncement marks a watershed in Acorn's history.

"The projected return on the Risc 3 project was pretty marginal and we would have had to invest more to get it. Given that we have a limited number of investment dollars we decided to focus on digital television."

Mr Boland said that 75 per

cent of homes would have digital set-top box decoders or television sets by 2006. In order to handle interactive applications such as home shopping and banking, those boxes would require massive computing power.

Acorn plans to develop powerful, efficient processors for set-top boxes by linking up with semiconductor manufacturers

and consumer electronics companies.

The group is spending £1m on making 60 of its non-engineering staff redundant and writing off surplus stock. A further 15 employees will be transferred to Kemplar, Acorn's joint venture with US computer maker Apple.

The move leaves Acorn

with a workforce of around 100.

Mr Boland said the company was still working on ways to return its stake in ARM, the computer chip design company that was floated on the London and Nasdaq exchanges earlier this year, to shareholders without incurring a huge tax bill. Acorn hopes to put proposals to shareholders before year-end.



**THE INDEPENDENT**  
Friday 18 September 1998

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# BaE leads the way to a hard landing

FOOTSTIE PLUNGED as trading statements disappointed, profit forecasts were dragged down and the US central bank chief, Alan Greenspan, seemed to kill off hopes of a concerted 75 interest rate fix. The blue-chip index finished 158.8 points down at 5,132.9. At one time it was off 190.2 points.

With New York in retreat and other world markets weak, there was no chance the stock market could buck the downturn. Home-grown problems also weighed heavily, with trading news responsible for many of the major falls. Nervousness ahead of today's "double witching" when options and futures expire, was another inhibiting influence. But it's an ill wind... government stocks, on safe haven appeal, were strong and gained around a point.

Only 11 Footsie constituents produced gains. Insurer GRE, probably reflecting its glib holding, rose 9.75p to 251.5p and Centrica, still reflecting figures and stockbroker buy comments, fared a modest 2.5p to 104.5p. EMI firmed up to 399p on relief that it is not pursuing a takeover of the PolyGram film unit. Earlier the shares had been up 14p.

## MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

Others gaining included defensive shares such as United Utilities.

British Aerospace led the retreat. Fears that the Saudi Arabian government may postpone Al Yamamah payments sent the shares nose-diving 39p to 329p. It is estimated that BaE collects around £2bn from its Saudi supply agreements each year.

The surprise BaE profits warning was another sobering influence. BaE slumped 59p to 669p, a two-day fall of 156p, and again dragged Scottish & Newcastle

lower, off 15p at 710p. Whitbread, which had earlier resisted the BaE fall, lost 22p to 728p.

The rest of the beverage, once regarded as safe shares in times of stress, was weak with Greenall down 27p to 332p and Vaux, calling time on its breweries to focus on hotels and pubs, 19p to 257p. Rank, the leisure group, was also caught in the BaE fall-out. It fell 22.75p to 248p.

The plug was pulled on the General Electric Company after the French group Alcatel warned that it would not hit profit expectations. The engineering and telecoms conglomerate added to the general uneasiness, with similar interests, was spooked 39p to 424p. The Alcatel alert also caught the likes of GKN, off 40p at 620p.

Superstores gave ground as J Sainsbury prepared to embark on a price-cutting drive. There were reports that it plans special offers on a range of goods as well as spending heavily on a promotional campaign. BT Alex Brown was one investment house to make cautious noises about the sector and Credit Lyonnais put a sell sign over Sainsbury, CSFB was another

to relegate Sainsbury to its sell list. Feather & Greenwood reckons only Sainsbury of the five leading supermarket shares is a buy; the rest should be sold.

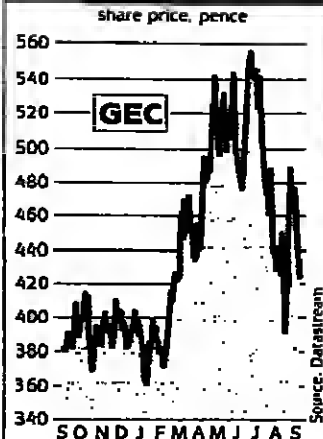
The burst of analytical activity

FIRTH, the steel group which is also involved in aircraft services, was one of the few to keep aloft in the teeth of the storm. The shares gained 1.5p to 21.5p after it became known that the stockbroker, Beeson Gregory, planned investment meetings with institutions next week.

The group's shares have drifted down from 39.5p this year: they touched 68.5p two years ago. Firth's profits last time fell from £1.7m to £1m.

left Sainsbury off 37p at 525.5p; Asda 8.25p at 174.5p; Safeway 12.5p at 305.5p and Tesco 8p at 163p. Even Somerfield found the weight of gloom heavy and fell 10.5p to 45p. HSBC and Standard Chartered gave ground after Warburg Dillon

## SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Read lowered its dividend growth estimates. HSBC tumbled 8p to 1.07p and Standard 38.5p to 400p.

Imperial Chemical Industries, still smarting from the Merrill Lynch downgrade, fell a further 3p to 500p and Ladbroke, fretting about a monopolies block on its Coral betting chain acquisition, lost 23.5p to 221.5p.

The prevailing retail gloom

trapped Marks & Spencer, falling 30p to 445p, and Unilever was ruffed by a Gillette profits warning, down 10.5p to 490.5p.

Enterprise Oil, where Italian take over hopes linger, was at one

NEWCOMERS are still prepared to risk the misery of a falling market. MSW, with a management planning system originally developed for the Ministry of Defence, hopes to float in the next few weeks.

The company is planning to raise around £3m, which will provide it with an £8m capitalisation. Ahead of the share issue the group has won a contract to help the HSBC investment group to relocate from the City to Canary Wharf.

time lowered by 40p; the shares closed off 15p at 379p.

Amid the carnage some brave souls were prepared to make optimistic forecasts. Panmure Gordon put a 950p target price on BT, which has just collected £4bn from its MCI

stake; the shares fell 29p to 815p. Not only blue chips were engulfed in depression. The mid cap index crashed 71.4 points to 4,687.2 and the small cap 18.6 to 2,072.2.

Psiion, the hand-held computer group, lost 31.5p to 471p with a line of 4 million shares hovering. Business Post, on its profit warning, was dropped a further 55p to 310p and results left Next off 37.5p at 407p.

Greenwich Resources softened 1.75p to 16p after it launched an agreed share exchange bid for MMS Petroleum. MMS rose 7p to 32.5p.

Meristem, a specialty chemical group, also headed north; up 5.5p after engineer Turday & Carlisle disclosed it held 16 per cent of its capital. T&C could not comment and Meristem said it had not been in contact with its new shareholder.

Tay Homes held at 121p after the Sunley family lifted its interest to 9.3 per cent. And Paramount, the pub chain, stuck at 21.5p as the quantity named Picks Pigs increased its holding to 7.64 per cent.

SEAQ VOLUME: 979.4 million  
SEAQ TRADES: 56,311  
GILTS INDEX: n/a

## Next suffers among the fashion victims

DAVID JONES, the chief executive of Next, knew there was something wrong with his spring and summer ranges earlier in the year when his wife came back from a shopping trip and said she had found nothing to her liking in Next's stores.

Only weeks later the group issued a dire profits warning caused by buying too much high-fashion stock in women's clothing and not enough of the classics.

If Mrs Jones is the bellwether of Next's fortunes, things could be looking up. She is again finding garments she likes again in Next outlets, and the sales figures are on an improving trend.

Like-for-like sales that were 9 per cent down at the half year have turned into a 1.5 per cent rise. Analysts say the balance of the stores' product ranges is looking better.

Why, then, did Next shares fall 37.5p yesterday to a near three-year low of 407p? True, the market was down overall. But Next is also a company which has issued a profits warning and is in a sector which nobody loves.

So it may take another set of trading figures before the market really starts to believe that Next has put its mistakes behind it, even though the management seems to be doing all the right things.

The company has appointed a new womenswear director whose new ranges should start coming through from next month. New ordering and checking procedures have been introduced and improved warehousing is coming on stream.

Mr Jones is cautious on like-for-like sales in such a low-inflation environment. Profit growth will come from new space (60,000 square feet in the second half of the year) and higher sales per square foot.

On full-year forecasts the shares trade on a forward rating of 13. That is cheap for Next. But, given that the horror of the profits warning will take a while yet to fade away, there is no rush to buy.

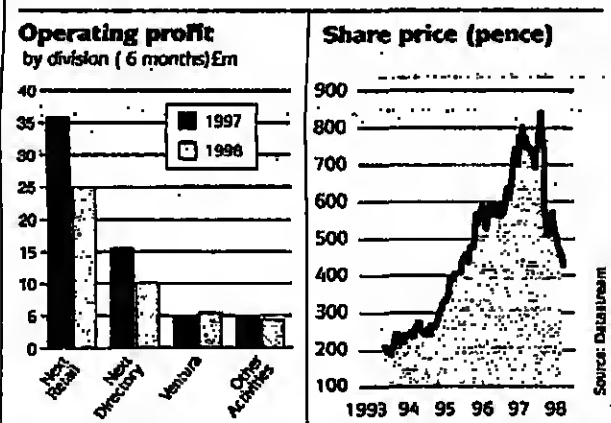
## INVESTMENT

EDITED BY PETER THAL LARSEN

### NEXT: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £1.5bn, share price: 407p (-37.5p)

Trading record	95	96	97	97	98
				Year to Jan 98	Half year to Jul 98
Turnover (£m)	773.5	946.8	1,176	520.9	536.7
Pre-tax profits (£m)	141.9	158.8	184.0	71.2	50.2
Earnings per share (p)	28.2	31.5	36.3	13.9	9.9
Dividends per share (p)	11.75	15.0	18.0	6.0	6.5



### Kwik-Fit drives into Europe

KWIK-FIT is enjoying life in the fast lane. The exhaust and tyres fitter is becoming a sort of Marks & Spencer of car repairs, using its brand name and well-oiled formula to branch out into other businesses and other countries.

The latest example of Kwik-Fit's expansion plans came yesterday with the £105m cash purchase of Speedy Europe, a car parts fitter with 568 branches across continental Europe. The deal could prove vital for ensuring Kwik-Fit's long-term growth. For a start, it almost quadruples the number of fitting centres it has across Europe, giving Kwik-Fit a valuable outlet at a time when its traditional UK market is reaching saturation.

Moreover, Speedy offers Sir Tom Farmer, Kwik-Fit's resourceful chairman, a chance

to launch some of the company's wackier ideas, such as Kwik-branded motor insurance and a breakdown service, on the Continent.

That said, Kwik-Fit will have to work hard at bringing Speedy's margins, now a measly 5 per cent, into line with the company's 10 per cent average. Sir Tom will also have to be careful about overstretching at a time when the European economic outlook is uncertain.

At home, Kwik-Fit continues to motor ahead in spite of some slippery markets. Yesterday it reported a 31 per cent increase in interim profits to £33m on turnover up 5 per cent to £251.7m. A glut of cheaper tyres imported from the Continent, courtesy of the strong pound, did little to dent profitability. Kwik-Fit actually managed to increase tyre profits despite a 5 per cent fall in prices.

The shares rose 19.5p to 467.5p yesterday and have now more than trebled in value over

the last five years. On around 18 times 1998 forecast earnings of 653m, they are a solid hold in uncertain times.

### City won't buy Cordiant pitch

IS ADVERTISING heading for a fall? Cordiant Communications Group, which separated itself from Saatchi & Saatchi last year, yesterday became the latest advertising group to try and quash fears of an industry downturn.

There was certainly nothing wrong with Cordiant's first-half results. Despite the loss last year of large accounts such as Compaq and Texaco, revenues were up by 4 per cent when adjusted for currencies. Operating profits rose by 11 per cent on the same basis.

Turnover in the Far East has forced the company to make 200 staff redundant at a cost of £1m, to be taken in the second half. But Cordiant remains on track to meet its own target of achieving 10 per cent operating margins next year. First-half margins were just 5.7 per cent, although the company does make most of its profits in the latter part of the year.

Investors remain unconvinced, however, knocking Cordiant shares down 1p to 107.5p yesterday. Given the advertising industry's natural propensity towards hype, this is understandable.

However, the City's reaction may be excessive. Even the most gloomy forecasts predict a slowdown in advertising spending rather than a decline. What's more, unlike its former parent in the late 1980s, Cordiant is not carrying a huge load of debt.

Panmure Gordon forecasts full-year profits (excluding the redundancy payment) of £27m, putting the shares on a forward earnings multiple of about 17. Although investors will probably steer clear until the industry outlook becomes more clear, the shares offer good long-term value.



Merlyn Lowther will be the 29th Chief Cashier of the Bank of England, and the first woman ever to sign our banknotes, when she succeeds Graham Kentfield (top) next January.

## Lowther signs for England

MERLYN LOWTHER will become the first woman ever to sign our banknotes when she succeeds Graham Kentfield as Chief Cashier of the Bank of England next January.

Mrs Lowther, 44, mother of two and married to a Newcastle United supporter, has spent her entire 23-year career at the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street since getting a first in Maths at Manchester University. Good to know our top bankers can do their sums.

British banknotes have only been signed by the chief cashier since 1855, whereas the cashier post goes back to 1694 when the Bank was founded. Mrs Lowther will be the 29th Chief Cashier.

So when does she produce the signature which will go on our notes? "Some time between now and January - I hope they will give me a few chances to get it right," she says.

"I won't be signing all the notes individually." Which is just as well, since there are around 1.4 billion banknotes in circulation at the moment. The Bank's Essex printworks churn out another 1.25 billion notes every year, worth a cool £13.7bn. The Bank reckons new notes replace old

### PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

ones in a roughly two-year cycle, so there will still be plenty of "Graham Kentfield" tenners around by the Millennium as well as "Merlyn Lowther" twentys.

SIR DICK Evans, chairman of British Aerospace, may have been appointed a non-executive director of NatWest Bank last week, but that doesn't mean he's transferring his own bank account from the Midland.

He says that as a director of NatWest he wouldn't be allowed to borrow from the bank. Obviously the poor chap is underpaid.

OH DEAR. Carl Gough, one of the highest rated property analysts in the City, won the "Golden Brick Award" for going bankrupt fastest in a Monopoly tournament on Wednesday night.

Mr Gough and his number two at Commerzbank, Ray

Jones, hit disaster at the Association of Property Unit Trusts Monopoly Challenge Dinner at the Savoy.

The shindig was the first of what is planned to be an annual event for the property industry. More than 220 property types witnessed Mr Gough's humiliation, including agents, surveyors, property lawyers and assorted tycoons.

Apparently property unit trusts (PUTs) now account for around £5bn of assets under management and now they want to make a noise about it. There were 24 teams competing for four prizes, and play was limited to one hour 45 minutes.

It took less than an hour for Mr Gough's team to go belly up - shortly followed by Hill Samuel Asset Management.

The Commerzbank boys were presented with a pair of bricks removed from a City building site and painted gold, to act as book-ends. They were also presented with a deluxe "Monopoly" set so that they could practice for next year.

The other three winners got proper "architectural" book-ends. The prize for "most appropriately dressed team" was won by Morgan Grenfell Property Asset Management - who arrived dressed as convicts.

Very reassuring for clients, I'm sure.

The prize for the team with the most property assets excluding cash was won by Knight Frank, property surveyor. The top prize went to Sovereign Land (originally part of the retail team at Gerald Ronson's Heron corporation), who had come as guests of Schroders, and who had the most property assets and cash when the whistle blew.

JOURNALISTS HAVE not looked forward to accompanying Her Majesty The Queen on her State visit to the oil kingdom of Brunei.

The foreign correspondents involved had to sign a Customs Declaration provided by the Royal Customs & Excise Department of Brunei, severely restricting the amount of alcohol they could take into the strictly Muslim country. The poor writers will not be able to buy booze for a full seven days, the length of the Royal visit.

The Customs form limits them to "two bottles of liquor or 12 cans of beer". They have also had to sign a statement saying the booze is for their personal consumption only.

It's a tough job - but someone's got to do it.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES				
Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark Spot
UK	1.0000			0.5956
Australia	2.8342	2.8304	2.8275	1.7825
Belgium	19.9978	19.9961	19.9953	1.6828
Canada	58.5718	58.5691	58.5663	1.6833
Denmark	2.5691	2.5655	2.5619	1.8611
France	10.6366	10.6349	10.6321	1.8611
Germany	1.4467	1.4429	1.4391	1.8611
Greece	9.5212	9.4977	9.4742	1.8611
Italy	2.9396	2.9358	2.9320	1.8611
Japan	13.0111	13.0064	13.0017	1.8611
Netherlands	1.3666	1.3628	1.3590	1.8611
Portugal	206.049	206.017	205.985	1.8611
Spain	222.43	222.39	222.35	1.8611
Sweden	6.4095	6.4057	6.4019	1.8611
Switzerland	1.7317	1.7279	1.7241	1.8611
USA	3.0930	3.0892	3.0854	1.8611
New Zealand	3.3143	3.3105	3.3067	1.8611
South Africa	12.617	12.613	12.609	1.8611
South Korea	291.37	291.33	291.29	1.8611
Taiwan	6.3253	6.3215	6.3177	1.8611
Thailand	2.8999	2.8961	2.8923	1.8611
UK	10.2755	10.2717	10.2679	1.8611
Spain	241.33	241.29	241.25	1.8611
Sweden	13.197	13.193	13.189	1.8611
Switzerland	2.3312	2.3274	2.3236	1.8611
USA	1.6845			0.5956

INTEREST RATES							
UK		Germany		US		Japan	
Base	7.50%	Discount	2.50%	Prime	8.50%	Discount	0.50%
France		Lombard	4.50%	Discount	5.00%	Belgian	
Intervention	3.00%	Canada		Rep Funds	5.50%	Swiss	2.75%
Italy		Discount	7.00%	10-d Repo	4.25%	Switzerland	3.30%
Spain	5.00%	Discount	6.50%	Sweden		Lombard	1.00%
Netherlands		Denmark		Repo(Avg)	4.10%	Discount	3.25%
Sphdence	3.30%	Discount	3.75%				

BOND YIELDS										
Country	3 mth	chg	1 yr	chg	2 yr	chg	5 yr	chg	10 yr	chg
Australia	4.86	0.04	4.73	-0.04	4.87	-0.04	5.05	-0.03	5.27	-0.06
Belgium	3.46	0.06	3.95	0.02	3.53	0.09	3.77	0.00	4.23	-0.07
Canada	5.71	0.00	5.82	0.00	5.82	0.00	5.82	0.00	5.82	0.00
FR	4.15	0.00	3.82	0.01	3.68	0.01	3.80	-0.06	4.15	-0.06
France	0.00	0.00	3.42	0.00	3.49	0.04	3.81	0.00	4.12	-0.06
Germany	3.47	0.00	3.56	0.00	3.59	-0.11	3.73	0.01	3.96	-0.03
Italy	4.83	0.04	4.08	0.01	3.88	-0.14	4.08	-0.03	4.41	-0.07
Japan	-0.17	-0.01	0.24	0.02	0.27	0.03	0.53	0.06	0.88	-0.13
NHands	3.36	0.00	3.57	0.01	3.96	0.02	3.78	-0.04	4.09	-0.03
Netherlands	4.20	0.00	4.07	0.01	4.07	0.00	4.37	0.00	4.67	-0.03
Sweden	4.20	0.02	4.25	0.05	4.29	0.09	4.48	0.08	4.76	0.02
Switzerland	1.54	-0.05	1.75	-0.04	1.60	-0.02	2.01	-0.07	2.81	-0.02
UK	7.10	0.00	7.07	-0.01	7.06	0.00	5.33	-0.10	6.02	-0.12
US	7.10	0.00	7.07	-0.01	7.06	0.00	5.33	-0.10	6.02	-0.12
US	4.46	-0.14	4.48	-0.05	4.67	-0.07	4.60	-0.09	4.78	-0.09



## SPORT

Commonwealth Games: Trinidadian beats Olympic silver medallist and world champion in fourth-fastest 100m ever

## Boldon unleashes blistering pace

By Mike Rowbottom  
in Kuala Lumpur

FOUR YEARS ago, in the Commonwealth Games 100 metres at Victoria, the precociously talented Ato Boldon trailed in the wake of Linford Christie. "He absolutely destroyed me," Boldon recalled. "I look back at that race and have the impression he was a man running with little boys."

Four years on, it is the 5ft 9in Trinidadian who is walking tall after a race in which he came of age as a 100m championship competitor. This was the first significant victory in the short sprint for a 24-year-old whose 100m career until this point has been a matter of outstanding times at all the wrong times.

Yesterday Boldon found the right time for everything, defeating a field which included Namibia's quadruple Olympic silver medallist,

FASTEST 100M  
IN HISTORY

9.84sec	- 1996 Donovan Bailey (Can)	at Atlanta Olympic Games
9.85	- 1994 Leroy Burrell (US)	at Lausanne
9.86	- 1991 Carl Lewis (US)	at Tokyo
9.88	- 1998 Ato Boldon (Trin)	at Kuala Lumpur
9.90	- 1991 Leroy Burrell (US)	at New York
9.92	- 1988 Carl Lewis (US)	at Seoul Olympics
9.93	- 1983 Calvin Smith (US)	at USAF Academy
9.95	- 1968 Jim Hines (US)	at Mexico Olympics

Frankie Fredericks, and the newly established World Cup champion from Barbados, Obadele Thompson.

Boldon's time was 9.88sec, just 0.04sec off the world record. Fredericks was second in 9.96 and Thompson beat the newly emerging Australian talent, Matthew Shirlington, to the bronze with a time of 10.00sec amid a tumult of noise from a crowd of close to 50,000.

It was company which proved too much for England's champion, Darren Campbell, who finished fifth in 10.08sec with Marlon Devonish three places behind in 10.22.

Boldon was patently delighted with an event which had gained huge credence from the late decision of both Fredericks and himself to contest it. He had entered the race saying that it gave the Commonwealth Games legitimacy. He emerged from it having legitimised his own claim to being an outstanding 100m runner, even if he had not achieved his ambition of breaking the world record. "The track didn't give me back as



Ato Boldon (right) salutes his No 1 status over 100 metres at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Namibia's Frankie Fredericks (No 1548) was second

Reuters

much as I had expected," he said. "But I'm happy with a win in 9.88. And more importantly, so is my coach, John Smith."

With the world record holder and Olympic champion, Donovan Bailey, out of action with a ruptured Achilles tendon that has put his career in jeopardy, the only serious challenger re-

maining for Boldon is his American training partner Maurice Greene, the world champion, whom he hopes to beat in Tokyo on Saturday.

He would not be drawn on the subject of the 2000 Olympics, but he was happy to dwell on a performance that lit him up like a bulb. "I am a track fan first," he said. "I knew that

people were worried about the 100m here at one time. But those kids and adults who have paid to come and watch this event can go home now and say, 'I have seen a good race.'"

The credibility of the women's 5,000m was diminished by the withdrawal of England's Paula Radcliffe and then Kenya's

Sally Barsosio. In their absence, the title went to Kate Anderson of Australia, who won in 15min 52.74sec, with Andrea Whitcombe claiming England's second silver medal in the athletics programme with a final lap surge, which bought her home in 15:56.85.

Du'Aine Ladejo making his major

championship debut at the decathlon after switching from the 400m, ended the first day in third place after jumping up the rankings with a time of 46.12sec in his former specialist event.

In the main men's 400m, Mark Richardson qualified competently for today's final but can hardly have

been reassured by the astonishing performance of his two Welsh rivals. Iwan Thomas and Jamie Baulch, who recorded 44.61sec and 44.83sec, respectively, despite chatting and larking their way through the final 20 metres of their semi-final. Thomas's British record of 44.36sec is surely under imminent threat.

## Birchfield pair soar to golden heights

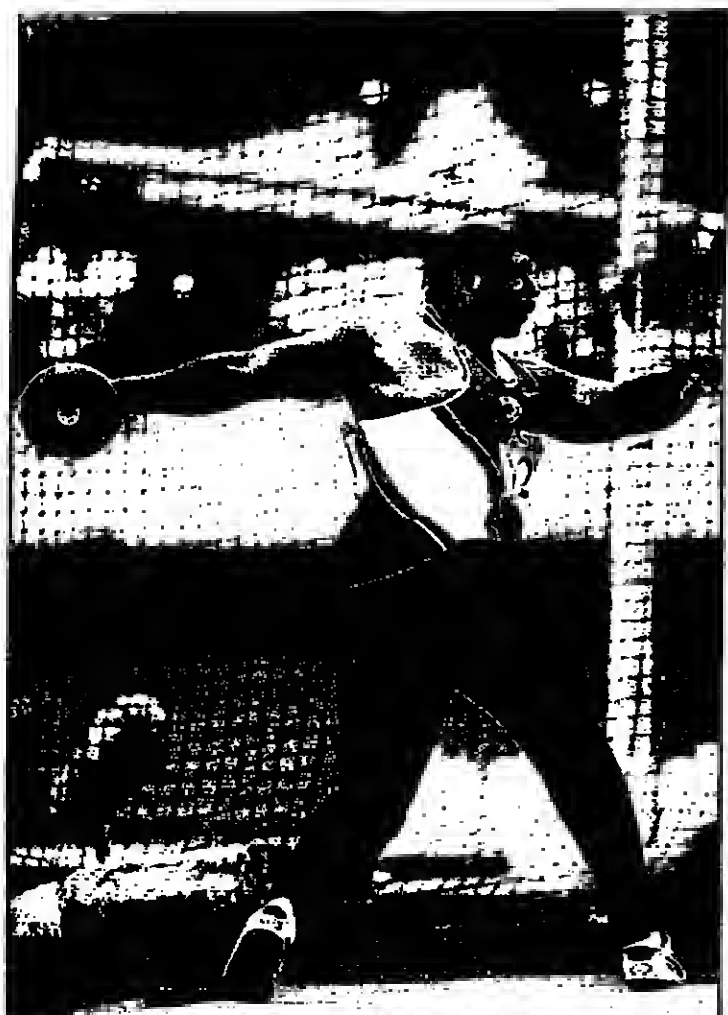
GOOD NEWS for England - even better news for Birchfield Harriers, as two of their number claimed gold medals on the second day of the athletics programme in the humid vastness of the Bukit Jalil Stadium. Step forward Robert Weir and Denise Lewis.

Weir, 37, now has a Commonwealth discus title to add to the one he won in the hammer 16 years ago at the 1982 Brisbane Games. If, as seems likely, a career which has outspanned those of such as Linford Christie and Roger Black is drawing to a close, this was a perfect way in which to end it.

The Birmingham thrower's accent has been modified by years of working in the United States, first as an American footballer - he narrowly missed selection for the San Francisco 49ers - and then in the coaching job at Stanford University to which he will return next month.

Before then he hopes to respond to an invitation to take part in the World's Strongest Man competition in North Africa, a title previously won by another English thrower, Geoff Cape. His competitive spirit has not weakened over the years. After seeing his second round leading throw of 63.12 metres surpassed by a fifth-round effort of 63.91 from South Africa's Frantz Kruger, he responded with his next throw to send the discus out to 64.42 metres, a Commonwealth Games record.

Lewis finished off the job she had more than half completed the previous day to secure her second heptathlon title. After winning the long jump in 6.52m and the javelin in 51.22m, she had sufficient leeway



Robert Weir on his way to discus gold yesterday

Allsport

going into the last of the seven events the 800 metres that she could have given her nearest challenger a lead of 100 metres and still won. As it was, a time of 2min 21.90sec produced a final score of 6,513 points, which left the 26-year-old comfortably clear of the silver medallist, Australia's Jane Jamieson.

Since winning the European title just 26 days earlier, an achievement which established her as the world No 1, Lewis had trained for just four days. "After my ankle injury earlier this year, I knew this was

going to be a season of consolidation so to score over 6,500 again when I know I have done less than 80 per cent of the work I should have done makes me feel very good," she said.

There remained one task for her to complete. She intends to make sure that Candace Blades, the 18-year-old Belize schoolgirl who finished 3,190 points behind her in last place, receives material assistance for her future career. "I've got to get her a decent pair of spikes," Lewis said. "Addresses have been exchanged."

## Sexton lands surprise gold

By James Parrack

IN THE traditional carnival atmosphere of the last night of the swimming, Katy Sexton produced the swim of her life to emerge as a surprise Commonwealth champion.

The 16-year-old arrived from Portsmouth hoping for a best time and a place in the final of the 200-metre backstroke, but a dramatic charge through the field down the final 50 metres took her from third to a nail-biting gold, winning by just 0.01sec in a British record time of 2:13.18.

"I really just went out there and raced. Before coming to Kuala Lumpur I only set my intentions on improving my personal best. This was not expected at all," she said somewhat overwhelmed by her achievement. "I thought that not winning a medal wouldn't exactly be the end of the world, but I had a quick look at the scoreboard, saw I was third and just went for it. I felt quite comfortable actually. It has gone really well, better than expected," said Sexton, who broke her own per-

sonal best by more than two seconds to win her first major international title six months after having knee surgery.

Helen Don-Duncan, the pre-race favourite, was also under the old record and finished third.

Sue Rolph won her second gold medal of the games in a tense battle with Scotland's Alison Sheppard over the 50-metre sprint. These two have been trading British records in the event all summer and last night was the first time they raced head to head.

Rolph's winning time of 25.82sec was some way off the record, but her tally this week of two gold, one silver and two bronze makes her England's top performer of all time.

However, the games golden girl is Australia's Susan O'Neill, who was winning her sixth race in the 200 metres butterfly. Her recording of 2:06.50 was the second fastest of all time.

James Hickman proved he was

England's man of the games by adding two silvers to the gold and silver he already has. Hickman led from the front in the 200 metres individual medley before Australian Matthew Dunn overtook him in the final stages. "I knew I would be in front after the first 100 and it would be up to him to catch me. Well, he did, but I'm very pleased with the medal and another British record."

Hickman helped the four-times 100 metres medley team to a silver medal and another British record of 3:40.73.

The race of the night was undoubtedly the 1500 metres freestyle. This is an event traditionally dominated by Australia and lining up was World record-holder Kieren Perkins, World Champion Grant Hackett and Olympic bronze medallist Dan Kowalski. Hackett quickly took the lead and was never challenged, but the packed arena was roaring the three-way battle for silver as South Africa's Ryk Neethling traded blows for 15 rounds with the

other two Australian heavyweights. After 30 lengths, Neethling somehow found the strength to hold off his rivals for the shock result of these games. Caught in the crossfire, Scotland's Olympic bronze medallist Graeme Smith and Ian Wilson finished fifth and sixth respectively.

Hackett was pleased to topple his more famous compatriot. "To be the first to do that in eight years is fantastic," he said. "But his world record [14:41.66] is still out there. To be honest I want to get down to 14:40 in the next six to 12 months."

Naturally, Perkins was not best pleased. "The most disturbing thing is that's the first time I've been beaten internationally over 1500 metres for eight years and I don't like it," he said.

Australia won half of all the medals in the pool, including 23 golds. England finished second with five gold, eight silver and nine bronze for a total of 22 medals, just two gold medals short of their best games since Brisbane in 1982.

## O'Neill's six of the best

SUSIE O'NEILL, Australia's golden girl, may as well change her name to Bo Derek. Last night she set Commonwealth Games history by winning her sixth gold medal of the week and taking her all-time total to a perfect 10, writes James Parrack.

The blonde Queenslander was chasing two records simultaneously; the highest number of golds at a single Games, and the most golds ever won. Her victory in the 200 metres butterfly last night took them both, overtaking the Aussie legend Mike Wenden's haul of nine from the 70s.

Coached by Scott Volkner on Australia's Gold Coast, O'Neill is an ad man's dream. In a land where sport is revered and swimmers can become

millionaires, she has both the fabulous good looks and the phenomenal sporting success that has marketing agents begging for her endorsement. A winning smile will only go so far of course, but O'Neill has also done it all. Olympic champion, world champion, the list is virtually endless. With one notable exception. She does not have a world record.

Last night she took a step in pursuit of that goal by swimming the second fastest 200m butterfly of all time. Her time of 2min 06.60sec put her just 0.7sec away from Mark T Meagher's Beamonesque mark of 2:05.96 from 1981. It is one of the holy grails of swimming and O'Neill is the only one who is even close.

And yet she appears wholly underwhelmed by her achievements. When asked about making Games history she meekly replied: "Um, it's probably the best feeling in the world." When asked on her assault on the Everest of world records, she is soft and gentle with harmless offerings on "staying focused" and "just wanting to do my best".

The girl-next-door persona is in stark contrast to her ferocious desire to win. She is polite and patient and the darling of world swimming. And she is about to get married. Her fiancé is a doctor, as are her father and brothers. The sound of hearts breaking across the swimming world will be deafening.



O'Neill: Stunning display







## BY DAVE HADFIELD







County Championship: Smith and Habib put on 247 for fifth wicket as Leicestershire take initiative in title battle

# Surrey's spinners fall short

THE VENUES that will decide this year's Championship may be at different ends of the country, but the team looking most likely comes from somewhere in between. Leicestershire began this game nine points to the good over Surrey, who in turn were two points ahead of third-placed Lancashire. By the end of the day, due largely to fine unbeaten centuries from Ben Smith and Aftab Habib, the Running Fox had put more daylight between its busy tail and the following pack.

Smith and Habib, both 26, have been two of Leicestershire's most consistent batsmen this season, both averaging above the 60 mark. Amazingly, neither has ever been on an A tour, a fact David Graveney, the chairman of selectors who was present at The Oval yesterday, may well be rueing.

Uncovered by the importance of the match, they seized the initiative, men unafraid to shape their destiny. Coming together at 102 for 4 when the visitors were labouring following some careless dismissals, the pair added 247 for the fifth wicket, already a Leicestershire record for any partnership against Surrey. At the close the visitors were 349 for 4, one runs short of a fourth batting point.

By contrast Surrey appeared to lack any such spark, and once Martin Bicknell, their most dangerous bowler, limped off in mid-afternoon with a knee injury, heads dropped alarmingly. Their fielding, too, was sloppy, and Habib was twice missed on 62 and 82, both chances of Rupesh Amin - the second a simple catch to Nadeem Shahid at silly mid-off.

As one of two spinners - a profitable play for Surrey before Saqlain Mushtaq fed the roost for the Sahara Cup in Toronto - Amin laboured without success. His partner in spin, Ian Salisbury - if spin was not too much of an exaggeration - was equally ineffective and Habib in particular took a liking to him. A marvellous timer of the ball,

BY DEREK PRINGLE  
at The Oval

Leicestershire 349-4  
v Surrey

Habib's bat-speed is enhanced by a late flick of the wrists. Like Smith, he is a fine cutter of the ball, though a silky facility through mid-wicket means he is not tied down by balls pitched straight.

Poor Salisbury, with less pressure than a Test match but more than a run-of-the-mill county game, was found wanting, and 50 of the 64 runs he conceded came in boundaries, including a mighty six by Smith to bring up his hundred.

When you hand over soft runs at that rate, batsmen know they only have to wait a few balls before a long hop or a full toss comes floating down.

Opting to bat first on a dry, beige pitch, Leicestershire did not begin auspiciously. Ever since he was mentioned as an England opener in the making, Darren Maddy has hardly scored a run. Yesterday was no exception, and his lunging prod at Bicknell, which he edged behind, was the shot of a man bent on survival rather than domination.

The left-handed Iain Sutfilts was scarcely any more commanding, and after some neatly clipped strokes off his legs he fell to Joey Benjamin chasing a ball well wide of off-stump for 18. Seven overs later Vince Wells, fortunate to be dropped on 18 at mid-on by Amin, became Ben Hollis's first victim of the innings when he skewed a leading edge to mid-off.

From his angle wide on the return crease Hollis's bat was initially able to keep Leicestershire fairly quiet and he hit the jackpot in his sixth over when Phil Simmons diverted it on to his stumps. At that point, Surrey were in good shape and good heart. However, they had not reckoned on Smith and Habib.



Yorkshire's Paul Hutchison, who recorded his best figures of 7 for 31, appeals for lbw against Sussex's Chris Adams yesterday

David Ashdown

## Hutchison delivers the cutting edge

YORKSHIRE HAD just the better of an intriguing day's cricket at Hove which saw 17 wickets fall for 288 runs - not a result of the bad behaviour of the pitch as much as the inability of the Sussex and then the Yorkshire batsmen to play with any conviction against the swinging ball. Sussex collapsed in a heap in 11 overs after lunch and then, after a poor start to their innings, Yorkshire were steady by the determination of Matthew Wood and Anthony McGrath in a fourth-wicket stand of 76 before three late wickets once again balanced the match.

BY HENRY BLOFELD  
at Hove

Sussex 129  
Yorkshire 159-7

The ball swung consistently for much of the day and, in keeping with most contemporary batsmen, the lot presently on show at the County Ground were, with one or two exceptions, incapable of competing. For those who collect batting collapses, Sussex produced one as impressive as some of England's recent efforts, after they had been put into bat.

Their last eight wickets fell after lunch for 18 runs. Batsmen after batsmen paid the penalty of poor footwork and an extraordinary number of balls found the leading edge with the batsman committed to an on-side stroke, only to be outdone by a late outswing. After a good morning on which the Yorkshire bowlers must have felt they had wasted a great chance, Sussex had reached 109 for 2. Two more runs were scored before Rajesh Rao pushed forward to Matthew Hoggard and was caught at slip, and 11 overs later, Sussex were all out for 129.

Already Yorkshire seemed well on their way to their fifth successive Championship victory, all of which had been achieved without Darren Gough. Paul Hutchison, Gavin Hamilton, Chris Silverwood and Hoggard are all rangy young men with considerable ability, and plenty of enthusiasm and zest. Hutchison was the main destroyer, taking 7 for 31, the best figures of his career. His left, his control and his swing made him irresistible against batsmen ill-equipped to play the moving ball, and he looks a magnificent prospect. Chris Adams, who

should have known better, was the main culprit for Sussex, playing an outrageous drive at a wide one from Hutchison. For a while it looked like Yorkshire's batting would be every bit as poor. James Kirley bowled a fine first spell taking three wickets, as did Mark Robinson but without any luck. After tea Adams' bowling changes, which involved bringing on Keith Newell, were questionable - the ball stopped swinging quite so much and Wood and McGrath took charge, playing some delightful strokes in their stand of 76.

### Britannic Assurance Championship

Worcestershire v Durham

Worcestershire (Day 1 of 4): Worcestershire (3 pps) have scored 310 for all wickets against Durham (4 pps) at Worcester. Worcestershire won toss.

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## SPORT

BOB WEIR'S GOLDEN ARM P27 • YORKSHIRE'S SEVEN HEAVEN P30

## New Hoddle contract 'to be discussed'

GLENN HODDLE's future as the coach of the England team could be discussed at a Football Association International Committee meeting today.

Although Hoddle's report on how England have fared since the World Cup will be the main item on the agenda, it is understood his future in charge of the team will also be debated.

Hoddle still has 21 months on his current contract still to run, taking him through to the end of the Euro 2000 tournament (providing England reach the final stages in the Netherlands and Belgium). The FA however, wants Hoddle to sign an extension to his contract - up to the World Cup in 2002 - and a deal may now be close.

Alan Sugar, Tottenham's chairman, has derided the possibility that a new bid to buy into

## FOOTBALL

BY NICK HARRIS  
AND ALAN NIXON

his club - by a consortium headed by the journalist and broadcaster Richard Littlejohn - will be successful.

Littlejohn, a lifelong Spurs fan, had admitted he had "got together" with a group of businessmen and planned to buy 29.9 per cent of the north London club. However Sugar, who recently indicated he would consider selling his controlling stake in Spurs for an appropriate offer and then confirmed he had turned down an £80m offer by the leisure group ENIC, said: "Contact has been made but this is a football fan's fantasy dream and has not been given serious attention by the board."

Meanwhile, Spurs have had "preliminary discussions" with the winger Andy Sinton and the Scotland defender Colin Calderwood over new contracts. Both players' current deals expire at the end of the season.

Nottingham Forest have agreed a £1.5m deal to buy the Crystal Palace striker, Neil Shipperley. The player was due at the City Ground last night to discuss personal terms. The news came as Pierre van Hooijdonk, Forest's absent Dutch striker, said he was sorry for saying the club was "not good enough for the Premiership." He even added he might return to discuss a possible future in Nottingham, but, as he is already transfer-listed and has alienated colleagues and fans, a reconciliation seems very unlikely.

Sheffield United are set to sign a Namibian international, Ricardo Mannetti, from the South African side, Cape Town Santos. The midfielder, 23, impressed United's chief scout Lou Macari in a private friendly yesterday and will have talks about a £200,000 move.

Leeds are understood to be close to signing the Port Vale winger, Gareth Ainsworth, for £2m. Vale's manager, John Rudge, will let Ainsworth go after lining up Rangers' Steve Boyack as a replacement.

The Leeds chairman, Peter Ridsdale, yesterday called for an overhaul of European competitions, but insisted any super league must be merit-based. "Qualification for European tournaments, irrespective of who is responsible for their organisation, must be on a season-by-season merit basis and have no permanent member clubs," he said.

Chris Waddle's proposed move to Torquay United has been put on hold because the 37-year-old has a calf strain.

The Charlton striker, Paul Embien, has joined Wycombe Wanderers for £90,000.

Positive Wenger, page 31

## Ferguson may face Uefa fine

ALEX FERGUSON is facing an anxious wait to find out if he will be fined by Uefa, which spelled out a firm reminder on behaviour to managers last night, writes Alan Nixon.

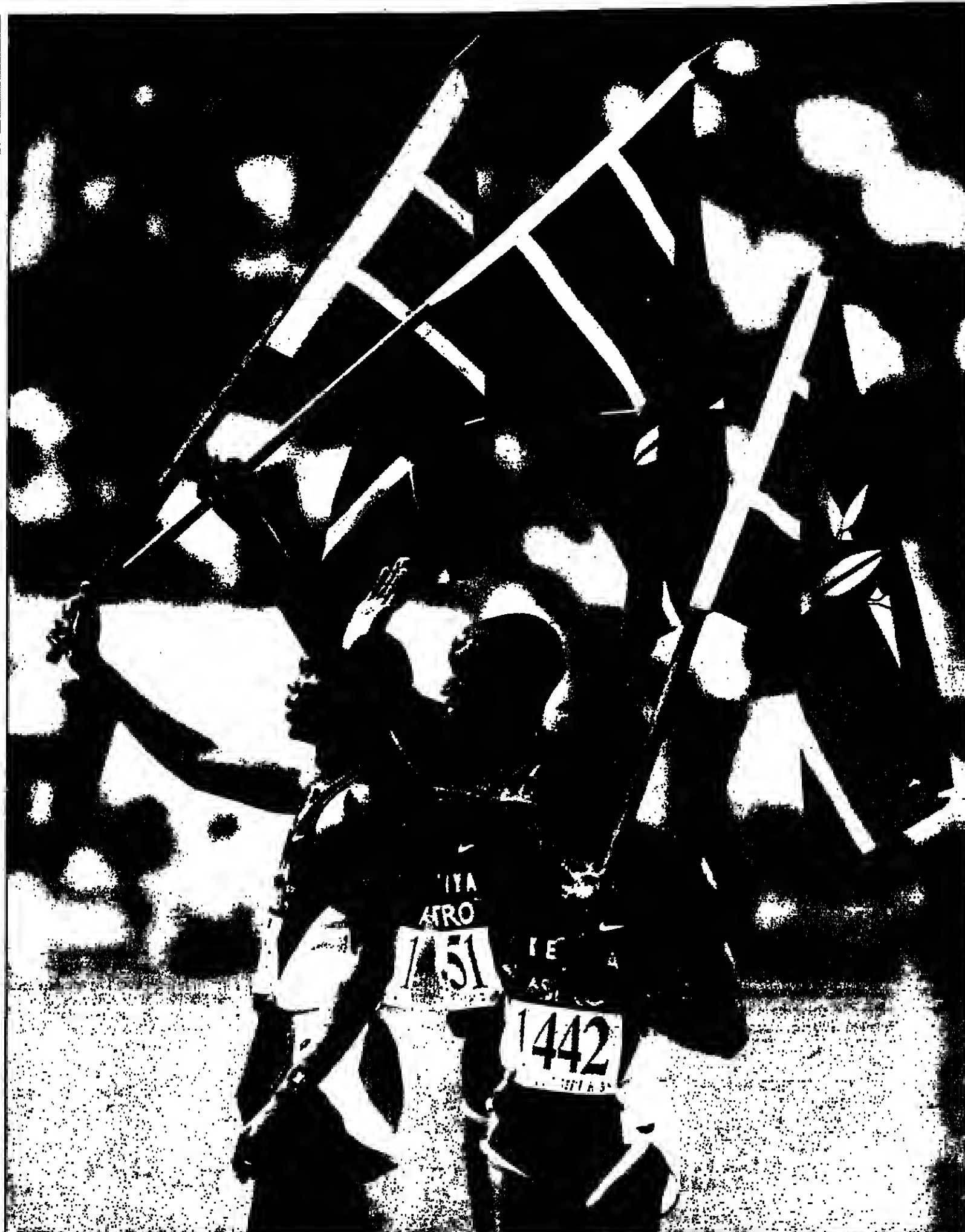
The Manchester United manager branded the Italian referee Stefano Braschi's handling of the draw with Barcelona as a "shocker" and some of his decisions "a disgrace." That language may lead Ferguson into the dock on 8 October when Uefa's control and disciplinary committee meets to review the match.

Ferguson could be in line for a penalty of his own after a media spokesman for European football's ruling body, Massimo Gonnella, said: "If we decide that the behaviour is incorrect, something can be done."

It's not a question of telling coaches what they can say, they should know. It's a question of common sense and education. "Managers and coaches can say what they want but they are old enough and mature enough to know what can be done about it. We have a scale of punishment, but it is a case-by-case decision and we will see if it is raised at our next meeting."

The Independent Manchester United Supporters Association (IMUSA) lobbied the TUC's general council in Blackpool yesterday. The IMUSA chairman, Andy Walsh, claimed the general secretaries they spoke to were "very receptive".

Walsh added that IMUSA now hopes to organise a fringe meeting at the coming Labour Party conference.



Kenyans Bernard Barmasai (right), John Kosgei (centre) and Kikpurui Misoi acknowledge their clean sweep in the steeplechase Reuters

## Christie record falls to golden Boldon

ATO BOLDON shattered Linford Christie's Commonwealth Games record to win the 100 metres title yesterday as England struck gold through the heptathlete Denise Lewis, the swimmers Katy Sexton and Susan Rolph and the discus thrower Bob Weir.

Boldon, who only decided last weekend to compete in Malaysia, clocked 9.88sec to take 0.03secs off the record set by Christie in Victoria four years ago. Namibia's Frankie Fredericks, another who planned to stay away, was second in 9.96, with Obadele Thompson of the Bahamas third in 10.00.

Lewis successfully retained her heptathlon crown. The European champion took the title by a massive winning margin of 159 points with an overall total of 6,513.

## COMMONWEALTH GAMES

BY MARK PIERSON  
in Kuala Lumpur

Before Lewis completed the formality of retaining her title, Weir broke the Games record to grab England's first athletics gold medal of the Games.

The Birmingham-born Weir took the title with a winning throw of 64.42m which broke the 16-year-old record set by Bradley Cooper of the Bahamas by 38 centimetres. Weir, who is a throws coach at Stanford University in California, became the first Englishman to win the discus gold in the 68-year history of the Games.

Sexton, England's teenage swimming sensation, came from nowhere to strike gold, de-

stroying her personal best for the second time in a dramatic day at the 200m backstroke.

The 16-year-old from Portsmouth allowed favourite Helen Don-Duncan and Australia's Meredith Smith to battle between themselves for much of a tense race only to win herself in 2:13.18.

Rolph toasted double gold for England with the victory she had predicted over 50m freestyle to supplement her opening-day win at twice the distance. The Newcastle 20-year-old sprinted to a narrow success, clocking 25.82 to defeat Scotland's Alison Sheppard by a mere tenth of a second.

England's James Hickman collected his second silver of the Games with a brave victory bid at the 200m individual medley.

Results, page 27

## Sosa stays with the pace

SAMMY SOSA is matching Mark McGwire home run for home run in grand slamin' style as the contest that is holding America spellbound shows no sign of letting up.

Sosa hit his 63rd homer in the eighth inning and drove in all of Chicago's runs as the Cubs beat the San Diego Padres 6-3 on Wednesday night.

McGwire and Sosa now have nine games left to bring their duel to a conclusion - the prize being sporting immortality.

## BASEBALL

With flashbulbs popping and most of the crowd of 49,891 on their feet, Sosa drove a 93 mph fastball from Brian Boehringer into the second deck in left field with two outs. Sosa had drawn level on 62 with his St Louis Cardinals rival, McGwire, on Sunday when he connected twice in a stunning performance at Wrigley Field. That gave him four homers in three days. Not to be outdone, McG-

wire went ahead again when he hit his 63rd in the ninth inning of the first game of a double-header on Tuesday night.

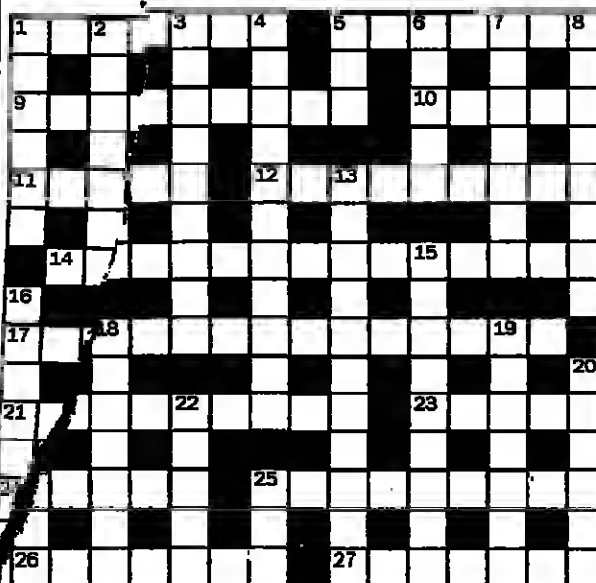
Then, on Wednesday, the crowd went wild when Sosa's ball settled inside the foul pole, setting off a mad scramble for the souvenir. An adoring public demanded that he was summoned back on to the field for a curtain call. Mark Grace stepped out of the batter's box and Boehringer stepped off the mound during the ovation.

## THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3719, Friday 18 September

By Phil

Thursday's solution

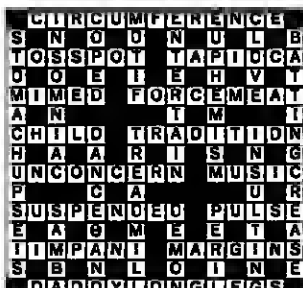


## ACROSS

- 1 Protest - a nervous reaction of the people (7)
- 5 What could make Blair seem miserable? (7)
- 9 Holy woman tucking into fake booze - there's a puzzle (9)
- 10 Nothing good in managed media outlet (5)
- 11 Society girl not wanted in smart broadcasting (2, 3)
- 12 One's conceivably not grey and u/s! (9)
- 14 Anticipated what the balloon did? (4, 4, 6)
- 17 Care is required from those in high places (8, 6)
- 21 Be less solemn - turn on more lamps (7, 2)
- 23 Verbal indication of potential strength (5)
- 24 Noise does for one in middle of din - silence wanted (5)
- 25 Journalist's sleeping arrangements restricted by lover (9)
- 26 US city with a good deal of superfluous computer material (7)
- 27 Make more general changes (7)

## DOWN

- 1 Entry frames Court physician (6)
- 2 Command chap to get a partner for the evening (7)
- 3 Town in Kent not upset over card game (9)



- 4 Dodgy deals, perhaps - what a family business can't afford to be doing (9, 2)
- 5 Intend removal of brackets from motorway designation? (3)
- 6 A mathematical quantity involving number throughout (5)
- 7 Great at swimming in display of watersports? (7)
- 8 No army on manoeuvres may surround Chinese state (8)
- 13 Crazy about musical work (piano) that can't be finished? (11)
- 15 Eggs on fashion student to embraced lecturer for example (4, 5)
- 16 Embraced in sloppy cuddle (8)
- 18 Racist, say, accepting a couple of foreigners? A mythical creature (7)
- 19 Nameless criminal - he has stuff that could slay you! (7)
- 20 Author sounding austere when read aloud (6)
- 22 Dance with beat and energy (5)
- 25 I'm very tipsy, primarily! (3)

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# FRIDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



Tommy is not your average criminal. He belongs to Britain's most feared gang of drug dealers and hit men. Bound by blood, they thought they were untouchable. But you can't rely on anything these days, not even...

## Adams family values

Several National Crime Squad detectives are probably nursing serious hangovers today. They have had much to celebrate. This elite team has finally debunked the myth that Britain's most notorious crime family - the Adams - is untouchable and unjailable.

Eighteen months ago, they arrested one of the brothers, 40-year-old Tommy Adams, in the middle of a drugs deal in the Britannia International Hotel in London's Docklands. He and several other men were charged with conspiracy to supply drugs and one of them with the possession of a Magnum revolver. On Wednesday, owing to the meticulous surveillance work over a year which led to the arrests, Tommy Adams and two of his lieutenants were given long jail sentences.

Over the last 10 years, the Adams have become notorious as the most infamous crime family in Britain, allegedly controlling a multimillion-pound drug dealing empire. As a result, the Adams are perhaps the most investigated family in criminal history: the subject of investigation and surveillance by Scotland Yard, Customs, Interpol, the Spanish police and even MI5 in their new anti-organised crime role. At one point in the early 1990s, a Customs contact told me there were seven separate co-ordinated teams of officers looking into the family's diverse criminal activities.

But the Adams were also rumoured to have had police officers and a Conservative MP in their pay. After a decade without a major conviction, it looked as though the gang were invincible and unconvictable. This week all that changed.

Outside the courtroom, the man who led the investigation, Detective Chief Inspector Philip Burrows, said: "This case is a success for the National Crime Squad and dispels the myth that there are people who are untouchable. Tommy Adams was certainly a member of the upper echelon of major criminals and we have proved that

an untouchable strata of criminal does not exist. It sends a clear message to anybody else - you can run but you can't hide".

The Adams gang is part of a large extended working-class family from Islington in North London. The brothers who lead the gang were brought up on the Barnsbury Estate - just a revolver shot away from Tony Blair's former home. Their parents still live quietly in a council flat there. According to one visitor to the flat, "the living-room and hallway are festooned with photos of the children, especially the boys, when they were young innocents". There are 11 children in all; Tommy is the third oldest brother.

Islington has always been home to the crème de la crème of heavy proletarian villains - families like the Nashes, the Regans and the Smiths. They were so tough they kept the Krays out of North London in the 1960s. Some of the most notorious armed robbers of the 1970s - when armed robbery was in its heyday - hailed from Islington's backstreets. As a crime reporter, I was always fascinated by the way that in Islington, the old working-class criminal network and gentrying professionals like the Blairs lived side by side, often in the same streets, without their worlds ever colliding.

In the 1970s and 80s, the supergrass system decimated the ranks of this criminal elite. With robber rapping on robber, the old criminal loyalties disintegrated. You cannot run a gang if you can't trust your cronies. The second oldest Adams brother, Patrick had been convicted of armed robbery in the 1970s and jailed for seven years. He learnt the lesson: in this new climate only close blood-ties could he depend upon.

In the 1980s, the armed robbery fraternity moved into drug dealing. The old-style villains professed disdain for drugs. But the younger generation, like the Adams, had no such qualms about drugs. One of the younger Adams brothers had a heroin problem for some years. By all accounts they were just a local Irish Catholic family with several tearaways in its rank, when, according to legend, the gang took on a local gangster, won and

began to run a number of his drinking dens. The big time beckoned. They swiftly extended in pubs and clubs where drugs could be sold.

"They run everything like a corporate business," said one detective. "The gang leaders are like a board of directors, a long way back from actual operations." Pat, 43, is considered to be the most intelligent member of the family. Tommy was the money man. Their home base still remains Islington. Until recent years, their favourite haunt was the King Edward pub, near the Barnsbury Estate.

The controlled aura of violence around them is the key to their success. They are, quite simply, feared and do not make idle threats. They have been accused in the media of numerous gangland "hits". In 1996 the *Independent on Sunday* said the gang were linked to "several murders". According to popular legend they invented the "two on a bike" hit - a powerful trail bike draws up, the pillion passenger gets off, produces a gun and shoots the

the Krays, the Adams have avoided their flamboyant and public lifestyle. In recent years the family have bought into legitimate business and own a string of clubs and bars as well as other property.

The brothers are all good-looking, keep themselves very fit and dress very stylishly - looking more like older professional footballers than gangsters. Tommy is far more handsome in real life than his police photo suggests.

The family do not like publicity. John McVicar first mentioned them in an article in 1987 and received a visit from a family associate who politely and firmly extracted a promise not to write about the family in the future.

When in 1992 McVicar again wrote about the family, detailing how one of the gang shot Mad Frankie Fraser in front of Turmills Nite Club in Clerkenwell the previous August, McVicar received another visit. "Although I apologised for the breach, the emissary shrugged his shoulders and grimaced mournfully. 'John,' he said, 'it

surprised target. The two hit men then roared off, their faces hidden by helmets. The victim is usually a rival or someone who has transgressed the unwritten rules of the underworld."

Two months ago, an underworld contact told me that some 20 people had been killed this way. But the former armed robber turned journalist, John McVicar, has said, "It is doubtful that they have killed in anything like the numbers that are currently touted. Certainly most of the hits attributed to them in the press do not carry their hallmark."

The family seems to have been involved in some gun play. Mickey 33, the youngest brother, was convicted of possession of a firearm in the mid 1980s. Some years ago a dispute with another Islington crime family, the Rileys, culminated in a shoot-out in Finsbury Square. A lot of damage was done but nobody was killed.

Although said to be more violent than

saddens me to have to say it, and I hope it won't go any further, but if I were you I'd purchase some portable insurance, get in some target practice and be very careful of big trail hikes in your immediate vicinity." McVicar explained it was not appropriate for a journalist to go round carrying a gun.

As the family business has prospered, younger members of the extended family have been recruited to help with the criminal activities. Not all members of the family are criminals; some, including the Adams's parents and others of the 11 offspring are law-abiding and have held down normal jobs.

One of the biggest problems for the criminal side of the family is laundering the staggering amount of money acquired by the drugs dealing. They are believed to be worth over £50m and the police watch like hawks for any evidence of Adams's business connections.

Like many Islington criminals the Adam brothers have nurtured close links with Hutton Garden, London's jewellery and gold centre, just a mile away from their "manor". Money from their drugs deals is laundered by certain traders who turn their cash into gold and other non traceable assets. The money has poured in and the family have all bought large properties. Tommy, who is married to a woman of Greek extraction and is the father of four, owns a £450,000 three-storey town house in Mythe Street, King's Cross, not far from his parent's home. Older brother Pat now spends much of his time in his villa in Fuengirola on Spain's "Costa del Crime". It is said that these days, he does not like the company of criminals.

Over the years, the Adams family has become the bête noire of Scotland Yard. The Commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, must have been only too aware of the damaging effect of the Yard's failure to crack this high-profile gang, which had raised suspicions of police officers protecting the family.

Then, in early 1996, the National Crime Squad detectives assigned to the Adams had a break. They heard that Tommy Adams was running a large cannabis importation operation. As the subject of numerous target operations over the years, Tommy was highly security conscious. To prevent eavesdropping he controlled his lucrative drugs trade from the back of black cabs using two former school mates from Islington, Michael Papamichael and Ed Wilkinson as trusted aides.

From June 1996, drugs intelligence officers managed to plant tiny listening devices in the cabs, and hotel rooms, which secretly monitored dozens of conversations. They recorded incriminating discussions about the gang taking delivery of up to three tonnes of cannabis at a time, information about their dealing with Wilkinson was recorded admitting involvement with cocaine and boasting that he kept a .44 Magnum revolver in his mother's flowerpot. When the police team felt they had enough evidence they seized and arrested the gang.

Early this week, the trial began at

Woolwich Crown Court. Everyone was prepared for at least two months in court. The defendants were said to be confident of acquittal. Certainly, members of the family gang had proved difficult to convict in the past. But then, on Wednesday morning, word went round the court that the defendants were going to plead guilty.

Later in the afternoon Adams, and his lieutenants Michael Papamichael and Edward Wilkinson, all 40 years old, came in front of Judge Michael Carroll for sentencing. The Judge said it was clear they had run an illicit operation of considerable magnitude.

Tommy Adams was jailed for seven-and-a-half years and ordered to pay £1m in a confiscation order. Failure to pay within one year will result in an additional five years on his sentence. Papamichael, of Liverpool Road, Islington, was sentenced to six years and ordered to pay £70,000. Wilkinson, of Inglebert Street, Islington, was jailed for nine years for conspiracy to supply cannabis and cocaine and the possession of a revolver. He was ordered to pay £30,000 or face a further jail sentence. After being sentenced, Adams, wearing a grey tracksuit, was led laughing from the dock.

A month ago, the National Crime Squad undertook a further series of raids. Detectives from Scotland Yard raided addresses in London and south east England. Twelve people were arrested and charged with various offences including attempted murder.

The family are now licking their wounds. John McVicar, who has written extensively about the family, said yesterday that they "have hit a series of rocks here. Aside from Tommy's conviction, their associate Gilbert Wynter was killed in March and another close associate has cancer".

Things are apparently not well within the family. Oldest brother Terry, 44, and Tommy had a full-scale row in the visitors' area at Belmarsh Prison shortly before the trial. But as one underworld source said yesterday, "The Adams are not finished yet".

BY PAUL LASHMAR

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**LAW**

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It's a family thing



## Greedy bastards

Sir: I see that Ruth Lea is still trotting out the same old myth of market forces applying in the jobs market (Right of Reply, 17 September).

We hear continual bleating from the "fat cats" about lack of designers and engineers, yet industry steadfastly refuses to stimulate the market for such people by paying them what they deserve. I have children at sixth-form and university. I know that they and their friends are very much affected in their career choices by ultimate pay prospects.

Years of shortages of physics, chemistry and maths teachers have resulted in no extra pay to "solve the problem". Nurses continue to get a lower percentage rise than doctors, despite the shortages.

Yet, when it comes to the company directors, to whom this mythical market applies, I see those who fail in one appointment being rapidly snapped up into another high-profile, high-pay directorship. Truly worthwhile company directors who really know what is going on in their business from the shopfloor up are incredibly rare. The market is emphatically not ensuring that there are enough of them.

How does an intelligent young person with ambition break into this heady realm? By wearing the right suits, saying the right things and most of all coming from the right background - knowledge of technology and life seems to count for very little.

JR CRELLIN

Weston-super-Mare, Somerset

Sir: I am delighted that at last Ken Livingstone has raised the banner for addressing the politics of greed ("The union chiefs are right - our policies are causing job losses", 16 September). I am sure that it was just pressure of space which stopped him from noting that when greedy bastards give themselves £50,000 pay rises the Government pockets £20,000 from the greedy bastard and £5,100 from his employer, thus helping to pay the wages and any pay increases of "the public sector workers who have borne the brunt of backdoor incomes policies for two decades" a higher take than the Government would achieve if the company's money had been spent in any other way.

No doubt he would also have gone on to note that such pay rises have only the most marginal effect on inflation since there are very few greedy bastards in a position to award themselves whopping pay rises.

Finally, no doubt he would have observed that the paradigm greedy bastard who simultaneously imposed a pay freeze on his underlings is helping to keep inflation down, to the benefit of all of us.

It was a pity that Ken Livingstone could not find space to mention that the greed of private company directors is a private sin but a public benefit, but no doubt that will come in his next article.

ALASTAIR MEEKS

London SE13

Sir: Seeing your headline "Fury over 'greedy bosses' attack", (15 September) I wondered if I had not last year voted for the wrong party. Reading your editorial ("Forget 'fat cats' and focus on fighting inequality"), I wondered if I have also been reading the wrong newspaper.

Can neither you nor the Government understand it is not the occasional outrageous behaviour of a "privatised" boardroom but the steady, consistent increase in apparently the majority of boardroom salaries at three or four times the rate of an ordinary employee's pay year after year which engenders the deep and growing resentment of our present situation, and a government which seems either unaware or unconcerned of the potential dangers it invites?

It is irrelevant that "there are simply too few really high earners to pay for a sustained attack on

poverty", as you put it. The point is that when poverty and its effects continue to grow, it is immoral and shameful that a privileged minority should ensure the steady increase in their own remuneration at a rate far in excess of that allowed to the rest. At the same time to preach wage restraint for the masses is the most repugnant hypocrisy.

A J NEEDS

London SE9

Sir: Please counterbalance your "Fury over 'greedy bosses' attack" story by reporting this GMB member's pride and elation that my general secretary has had the courage to speak out against this Government's obsession with sucking up to business.

Many of the workers who keep the public services that we all rely on running have also kept the Labour Party alive through their unions' contributions, without them Tony Blair would not have a party to lead. Forcing yet more pay restraint down their throats may look tough to Rupert Murdoch and the rest of Blair's cronies, but if I was a teacher or a nurse I'd be asking myself: "If I can't get a decent pay deal from this government, then what exactly is the point of the Labour Party - and why should I vote for it next time?"

ANDREW FALL

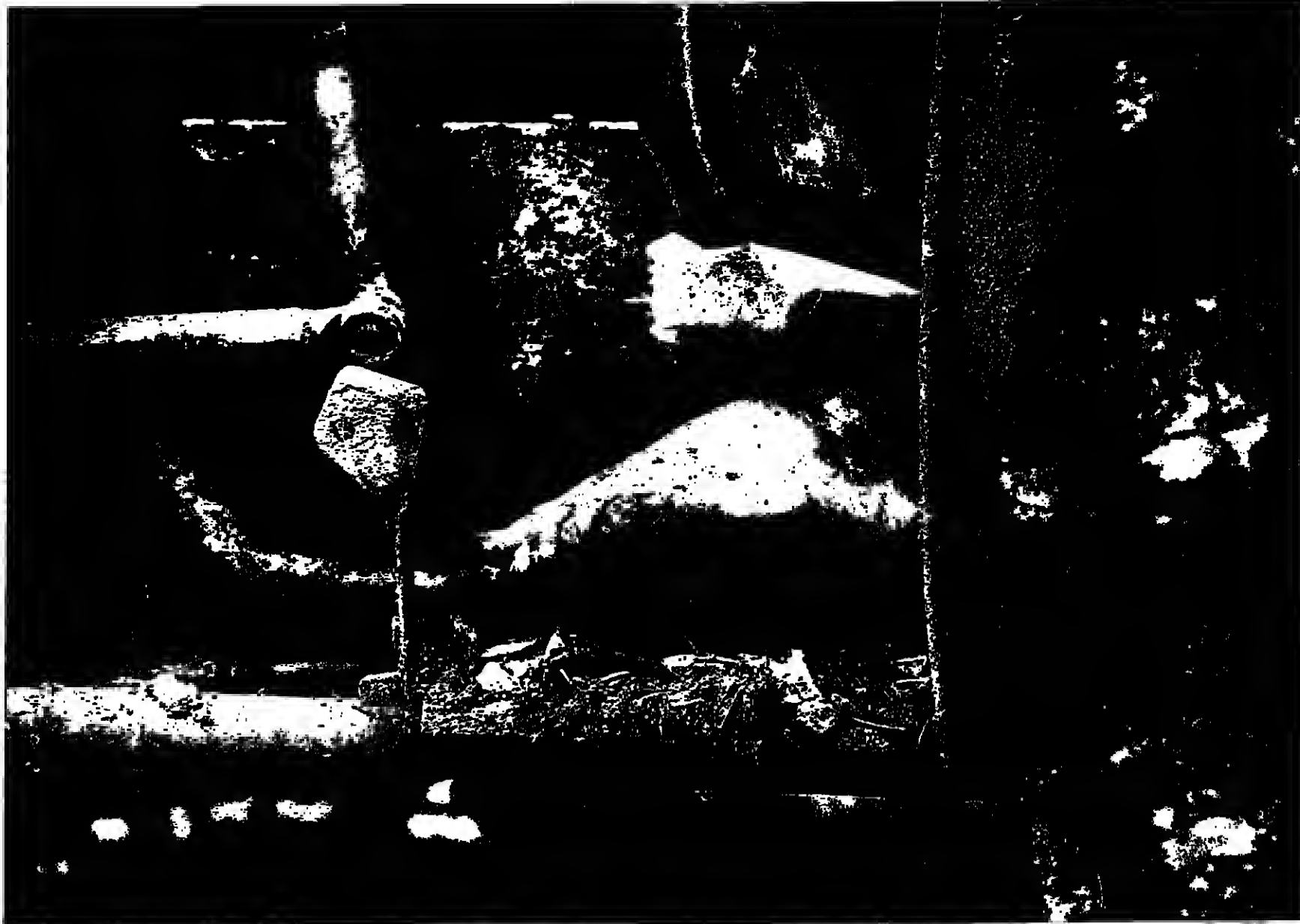
London N21

Sir: The New Experience Millennium Company argues that its bonus scheme to pay up to £430,000 in bonuses to three directors (Report, 16 September) "will make serving out their contracts more attractive to them".

How is it that Millennium Company directors need sweeteners to do what anyone else in the world accepts as right and natural? When I sign a contract to do a job, I expect to have to fulfil the terms of that contract and to finish the job and, if not, to be subject to due process of law.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk  
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity



Apples and Pears 5: a picker finds the best way to combat conditions in the orchards is to abandon his footwear altogether

Tom Pilston

It would be good to know which crony of the fat cat fraternity was responsible for wasting public funds by drafting such a woolly contract.

PETER D BROWN

London N1

## Consultant awards

Sir: Even if the system of making merit awards for medical specialists is reformed ("Minister ends consultants' 'old pals act'", 11 August), it will still remain a form of patronage and will continue to be used for persuasion or bargaining and will still be based, in the greatest number of cases, on certain untestable assumptions as to an individual's attitudes or abilities.

The system of paying specialists, that is consultants, is absurd. A consultant reaches the maximum point on the pay scale after five years or less. Thereafter, there is no increment until retirement. It is an absurd notion that a consultant five years after appointment has equal value with someone 15 years his senior, with considerably more experience. What is needed is not a revision of the merit award system; this system should be abandoned immediately and a properly structured form of remuneration for consultants implemented. This could well include greater weighting for some specialities than others and properly staged seniority payments. The contracts

should in some way be sensitive to the amount of work actually undertaken.

C R RAYNER FRCS

Aberdeen

Sir: With regard to the doctors' 10 per cent pay claim (report, 10 September), I have recently moved and experienced the following costs: solicitor's fees, £110 per hour; plumber, £60 per hour; locksmith, £65 per hour; TV repair, £95 per hour.

The NHS hourly rate for consultants is £20.17, this for a so-called 35-hour week, and takes no account of on-call commitments or time.

In light of the above I would encourage young people with four

A-levels to train as plumbers rather than urologists, electricians rather than neurologists, and forecast that the exodus of young doctors from medicine can only increase.

Dr R BANNON

Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

## New trees for old

Sir: Mike Woodin indulges in some flights of fancy with regard to last week's eviction of illegal occupiers of a site by Oxford railway station, recently purchased by the University to build its proposed Said Business School (Podium, 16 September).

It is true that the Under Sheriff and his men were forced to cut down a handful of trees as part of this eviction, but this was entirely because the protesters had secured themselves to the trees, and made it plain they would continue to do so, and to reoccupy the buildings, as long as the trees remained. The University did not want the trees cut down, as in no way did they affect our plans for the new Business School.

If our plans are approved, we will be planting 30 new mature trees at a cost of £1,000 each along the road frontage and on the station forecourt area, and we are confident that this area of Oxford will be much "greener" than it has ever been. This is again made possible through the generosity of Mr Wafic Said.

Far from demolishing the old Victorian London Midland Station, the University has taken enormous pains to secure the future of this listed building, which it was bound to move as a condition of developing the site. It will be dismantled, re-erected and refurbished at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre at Quainton, with the full approval of English Heritage and the Secretary of State for the Environment.

DAVID R HOLMES

Registrar  
University of Oxford

## IN BRIEF

inadequate. The millions of Bangladeshis who suffer the effects of arsenic poisoning will not be impressed by an international agency that thinks this problem has been "sensationalised".

Professor JOHN WHITELEGG  
School of the Built Environment  
Liverpool John Moores University

Sir: Having read your article about meningitis ("There's a killer on the run", 15 September) I am sure I am not alone in worrying about the prospect of parents of a seriously ill child searching their kitchen cupboards for a glass tumbler. Urgent medical attention should be sought for any child who is "floppy, unresponsive and unwell" regardless of whether they have a rash or not, let alone whether it disappears under a glass tumbler.

Dr JUDITH HALFORD  
Glasgow

Sir: Your report on Rhys Hughes being released into the community ("Dangerous paedophile, 65, is smuggled to freedom", 15 September) says that he has served six years of a 10-year sentence. It also says that he refused treatment in prison. Is it too simplistic to suggest that if paedophiles refuse treatment they should have no chance of not serving their full term in jail.

MAURICE OLIVER

Isleworth, Middlesex

Sir: I have just returned from Calcutta, where I had discussions with university researchers about arsenic in the drinking water of Bangladesh. On the basis of tube well data already available the problem cannot be "sensationalised" as your Unicef correspondents claimed (letter, 16 September).

The situation is dire, arsenic-contaminated tube well water is routinely used for drinking and cooking and the scale of the response from whatever quarter is grossly



MILES KINGTON

"If David Blunkett really wants to improve literacy all he has to do is ban signs with drawings"

your DIY material, you're heading for trouble. Do you know what the best-selling poem in the world is?"

(Professor Lockhart loves sudden changes of subject like this. It works really well on the telly, too.) No... well, *The Waste Land*? Something by Betjeman? Larkin? "The best-selling poem in the world is this," says Lockhart. "Every year that passes / Brings me closer to you / Every day that passes / Says, I'll Always Be True." That, or something like it, is sold by the millions every day on a greeting card. That is what people actually buy.

But it's terrible poetry! "My friend, that is irrelevant," says Justin Lockhart. "All that matters is what actually goes on in the wide world. What reading is really for. That is my business. And this is the first TV series which has ever looked at what people really read. Forget *The*

*London Review of Books*. Think *Exchange & Mart*."

Why *Exchange & Mart*? "Because out there in the despatch want-ads, people have evolved a whole new language influenced by the academics. People ask where new modern poetry is coming from. It's already there in the personal ads, the lonely hearts ads! Just as the modern collector of folk songs has to go out on the Arsenal terraces and record the chants, so the pursuer of applied literacy will rush out and buy the trade mags."

So applied literacy is taking over the world, is it? "No. There are obstacles." Like television? "Certainly not. There is more and more writing on TV the whole time - captions, running captions,

## Ethical audit

Sir: At a time when principles of good professional practice all too often seem to come second to commercial considerations, the "Chinese Walls" judgment in the KPMG case (report, 16 September) is very welcome.

That judgment is about people in the same firm acting for opposing parties, and has resonance for professions other than accounting. There is however another, more common and more profound threat to the exercise of independent judgement in accountancy.

Practices engaged as auditors use their position to identify other business services which they can sell to the companies they audit, with the aim of becoming general business advisors. This is done as a matter of policy, and as firms get larger so they are able to offer more services and embrace their clients ever more intimately.

Now, company directors should no doubt be free to buy all their business advice at one stall, if it appears to them, however misguided, that that gives the best outcome. However, audit is not business advice; it is a crucial check - with a strong public interest element - upon a company's reporting of its results. Auditors ought to stand as nearly as possible at arm's length from the subjects of their inquiries. Year by year, the commercial orientation of the accountancy sector is making this independence less and less attainable.

If we cannot look to the accountancy profession to secure the necessary degree of independence, the alternative has to be to protect the public interest by regulation from outside the profession. I should be very interested in readers' - and *The Independent's* - views on the form such regulation might take.

C J HOLLAND

London SE5

## Black and British

Sir: Could companies and organisations that use application forms containing an ethnic monitoring policy make sure that the words "black British" appear at the top of the list of options and that the term "black other" is removed?

I am a 34-year-old black British man, born in England, and I constantly come across application forms which have options for "black African", "black Caribbean", "black other" and "black other", but there is no option for "black British". Up to 80 per cent of people here with dark skin are British-born and have made a massive contribution to the British economy. This anomaly seems to deliberately try and deny them their British birthright and heritage.

Why is it that in 1998 it is still automatically assumed that everyone with dark skin has travelled from abroad and could not possibly have been born in Britain?

MILTON N WESTCARR  
Abbeymead,  
Gloucester

## Tough texts

Sir: I fear that some of the books I quoted as recommended reading for teenagers ("What every teenager should be reading", 17 September) - for example, Burckhardt on the Renaissance - may be thought a trifle ambitious. This is because I had no idea the list was for teenagers. My impression was that these were books people would do well to read before they die, and teenagers, of course, do not expect to die.

All this inadvertently highlights a familiar problem. If you do not treat teenagers as grown-ups, you are in trouble. If you treat them as grown-ups by recommending demanding books you can be in equal trouble. To that extent, my little misunderstanding with *The Independent* may have served a purpose.

GEORGE WALDEN  
London W12

## The man on the door of the Gents is eating our words

JUSTIN LOCKHART is hot. Justin Lockhart is NOW Justin Lockhart and he's going to be a star. That's what Justin Lockhart thinks, anyway.

Justin Lockhart is professor of Applied Literacy at Milton Keynes University. But what is Applied Literacy? And why will it make him hot, famous and a star?

"Applied literacy is literacy in action," says Professor Justin, smoothing back his locks and looking for a nearby mirror. "It's reading for a purpose. Reading is a very multi-function activity. For instance, reading Shakespeare is not reading for a purpose. Reading a notice which says 'Danger - 10,000 Watts' is reading for a very special purpose. It tells you to keep out. Shakespeare only tells you a story. Shakespeare is incomparably finer

literature than the notice which says 'Danger - 10,000 Watts'. But it is more important to read the notice. Shakespeare can enhance your life. The notice can save your life. That's applied literacy."

Hmm. And how will that make him hot, famous and a star? "We have been told endlessly that the electronic media are making reading and writing outmoded," says Justin, ignoring the question, "which is just so much pepperoni. The Internet depends absolutely on reading and writing. Look inside any newspaper. It is crammed with magazines on computers. If you want to learn about computers in a hurry, you don't go to computers, you go to a magazine about computers. They are all very badly designed, by the way, but that's for another programme. I mean, another time.

"Now, the people who run our media are all clapped out arts graduates who think that writing is the stuff they studied at university - in other words, that writing is all about great literature. Which is why we get all these programmes about great writers, and adaptations of Jane Austen... Good God! Great writing is the tip of the iceberg! It doesn't even begin to include such writing as instruction manuals, insurance small print, Acts of Parliament or record blurbs. You could easily make a case for Acts of Parliament being the most important documents governing our lives, but who has ever read one? Even seen one?"

"My message is this: if you never read Jane Austen, you won't suffer, but if you don't read the instructions on your CD player or

footnotes all over the place. All quiz games are based on writing. Illiterate people can hardly watch TV these days.

No, the main enemy of applied literacy is the pictogram. The little diagram, or picture which replaces words. Instead of the words Ladies and Gents we now have little pictures of a lady and a gent. We have lines through cigarettes to denote No Smoking, we have a sketch of a man running to denote Emergency Exit, we have two old people for Old Folks Home... If David Blunkett really wanted to improve literacy, all he has to do is ban signs with drawings on them, and insist on words only."

Justin Lockhart's new TV series is called *Now Read On*. It's hot. It's now. It just might make him a star.



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## Mandelson's delivery fails to meet the post

AS A FORMER TUC official, Peter Mandelson understands his former employers well enough to know that advocating Post Office privatisation yesterday would not have been a good idea. But the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's dismissal of recent press reports was less than categorical. "No decisions have been taken to privatise the Post Office," he said in an aside to the delegates in Blackpool. To which the temptation is to respond: "Well, they should have been."

The Post Office is the largest commercial enterprise left in the public sector, the sole significant survivor of the family silver. It stayed in the state sector partly because of the Queen's head on the stamps and the word "Royal" on the red vans, a tribute to Margaret Thatcher's pragmatism in the face of public sentiment. Michael Heseltine's attempt, after her removal, was then defeated by the Post Office unions, who proved to be canny effective lobbyists. But the logic of private-sector disciplines and opportunities cannot be held back for ever – and it would have been braver of Mr Mandelson to use his speech yesterday to begin to make that case to representatives of the Post Office's employees.

There can and should be much debate about the best way to introduce private-sector disciplines and private-sector finance into the Post Office. But there should be no argument about the principle. Indeed, almost all the Conservative privatisations were flawed. Assets were sold too cheaply; monopolies were sold off intact or as duopolies; and regulators were (and still are) too weak. But the programme has been hugely beneficial to the economy as a whole, and to the employees of former public-sector bodies.

It is important, therefore, that it should be done carefully. It may be that contracting out services may be the best model, rather than, as the Post Office management would prefer, selling the whole business. Sub-post-offices are, after all, effectively contracted out to self-employed shopkeepers. In addition, for public relations purposes – and Mr Mandelson made a nice self-deprecating reference to his expertise in this area – it may be that the word "privatisation" should not be used.

Letter post is both a natural monopoly and – to some extent – a social service. But, as the Prime Minister has said in relation to local government, what matters is not who provides a service but how well it is provided. Each user of the Post Office has a different view, but the reality is probably that, while many aspects of the service



are good, such as Sunday collection and twice-daily deliveries, some remain poor, such as parcels and forwarding. But all aspects could be improved, and competition and private finance are the best incentives.

Labour's manifesto was curiously worded, saying that the party "opposed" privatisation in the past. As for the future, it said only: "We will ensure that self-financing commercial organisations within the public sector – the Post Office is a prime example – are given greater commercial freedom to make the most of new opportunities." Call it greater commercial freedom or privatisation, what matters is that the Post Office, and

## A statement of the obvious

CALL IT progress: nowadays, if a child spits at a teacher, tortures other pupils or cannot add, he or she will not be beaten but "statemented". Beating children is, of course, a terrible thing. But, as is so often the case, when a noun is turned into a verb there is a loss of intellectual rigour in the process. Statements of special educational need have become an industry in their own right. The Audit Commission reports today that 260,000 children have been drawn into its maw.

There are two perverse incentives at work here. One is financial: schools get more money for statemented pupils and so have an incentive to classify difficult ones in this way. The other is emotional, in that parents want something to blame if their child is not doing well or behaving badly. Thus a child who pulls pigtails is diagnosed as suffering Attention Deficit Disorder, and one who has trouble with maths is said to be dyspraxic.

In some cases, of course, the statementing process is necessary, but it is far too bureaucratic. It seems to be run entirely for the convenience of the officials and professionals who operate it, rather than in the interests of children. It is not the best way to assess the "needs" of individual children.

That said, however, the system cannot be junked. It is one of the few defences against the centrifugal tendencies of creeping selection in schools. All the other incentives are for schools to exclude less able and disruptive children – either at the admissions stage, or by disciplinary action, or by tolerating truancy. At least statementing encourages schools to hold on to these pupils, and to focus on their needs. But the process urgently needs to be reformed, not least because, as the Audit Commission points out, a finite amount of money is being spread increasingly thinly across a growing number of children with wildly varying degrees of need.

## That's rich

AS THE Queen landed in Brunel, a Palace spokesman told journalists that this visit would be an example of the new democratic style. EHH, we were told, would be keen to meet as many ordinary people as possible. The only grain of sand in this well-oiled presentational triumph is that there are no ordinary people in Brunel. The locals are all rolling in oil money. The only poor people are the immigrant workers whom the Queen will not be meeting. With public relations like this, the monarchy is not going to survive long.

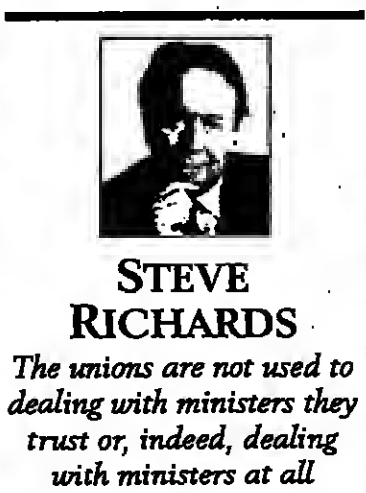
# Behind the bluster, Labour has quietly tamed the unions

DON'T BE fooled by the headlines. As journalists, we head for conferences looking for spats, and because there are many genuine differences of policy between unions and the Government, we found them this week. It was no exaggeration to say that they were all loggersheads over the economy. John Edmonds knew he would get on the front pages by talking about the "greedy bastards". It reflected a good piece of political theatre to suggest that Peter Mandelson and Eddie George had entered the "lion's den" when they spoke here.

But the juicy quotes and the theatrical imagery hide a much bigger story. For the unions have changed far more than is implied by headlines, reminiscent of those which screamed across the front pages 20 years ago.

The unions are defensive, as if still repenting for past misdeeds, subdued, confused, uncertain of their role, grateful for any crumbs from the ministerial table, willing to consider new roles for themselves and new economic ideas. Or, as John Edmonds put it to me in a *New Statesman* interview, after 18 years of Conservative government they are more humble. This is true even of Edmonds himself.

Indeed, I would suggest that the GMB General Secretary personifies the change rather well. Sure, he disagrees with the Government; yes, in my interview with him he raised the spectre of industrial action, warning that "accumulated grievances" over public sector pay could lead to strikes. But when I saw him in Blackpool, I got the impression he regretted his relatively moderate stridency. His original words jarred with the continuing goodwill that is felt towards the



STEVE RICHARDS

The unions are not used to dealing with ministers they trust or, indeed, dealing with ministers at all

Labour government, and an instinct that union leaders do not want to say or do anything which could jeopardise its continuing existence. Take another example.

When John Prescott spoke, earlier this week, his words matched the spin from the days before, a rare occurrence with this government. He delivered a blunt message on the Government's determination not to change course on the economy. To me, he also appeared tired and less engaged with his audience than he can be on such occasions, more Deputy Prime Minister burdened by government than the man coming home to his natural constituency. But the union leaders loved it, or said they did, which at the very least shows how polite they have become.

In a BBC interview, Roger Lyons, General Secretary of the MFS, and one of the biggest critics of the Government's economic policy, told me afterwards that he would like to send the speech to all his members. It was so good. The reason? Prescott had said that unions had the right to disagree with the Government. At the moment, that is the limit of their expectations – to be part of a dialogue in which ministers respect their right to dissent.

Let us move away from the economy to a specific, and potentially explosive, issue: teacher's pay and the related recruitment crisis in schools.

I watched David Blunkett's speech at the conference while sitting next to the General Secretary of the NUT, Doug McCavoy. He poured praise on Blunkett: the policies were making a difference in schools. Teachers recognised that he was trying his best to get

more money from the Treasury. Blunkett himself was evidently so committed to the brief. What a contrast, he observed, from the previous 18 years. That, of course, is the point, and the context, of what I take to be a significant change in the attitude of the main unions. After being ignored and rendered powerless by Thatcherism, just about anything else is seen as an improvement, worthy of rejoicing. But it is more than that.

An understated element of New Labour politics is the pivotal role played by politicians who are not necessarily part of the inner Blairite circle. It has become a cliché to suggest that only a few people matter in this government – I have used it myself plenty of times. Derek Draper is not alone. I now think this is wrong. Blair has been extremely astute in placing politicians in the right places who will deliver for him, but command genuine respect from trade unionists. Prescott is always cited as one such example. But Blunkett is another.

Ian McCartney, at the DTI, is also a pivotal figure. He spent virtually the entire week at the conference, which is fairly remarkable for a minister with a demanding schedule. In his ill-fitting shirts and trousers, he looked as far removed as it can possibly be from a pristine New Labour model, but he is not by any stretch of the imagination a figure from the past. He evangelises on the need for social partnership and stresses his ties with business as much as with the unions. He jokes that he, and his always immaculately turned-out boss, Peter Mandelson, are seen as The Odd Couple, but the two work well together. His importance, though, in this week's context is that trade union leaders trust and rate him. After the Conservatives, they are not used to dealing with any ministers whom they trust and rate. In fact, they are not used to dealing with any ministers at all.

Senior ministers have been annoyed to hear denunciations of their economic policies, without being offered a detailed alternative. It is a fair point. Throughout the week, I have asked union leaders whether they really think it would be wise, for example, for the Government to break a pledge on taxation.

My impression is that they do recognise the disastrous consequences of such a U-turn. Before Eddie George addressed them on Tuesday, John Monks stressed the need for them to offer detailed, workable policies of their own, not just to denounce the Government's approach. There are real opportunities

here, for I detect no enthusiasm whatsoever for conflict with this government. Indeed, I detect the reverse. There is a desire to grab at any opportunity to praise. This means that the unions will do everything possible to avoid outbreaks of industrial action, however unhappy they are with government policy. As Denis Healey observed, Tony Blair is a more fortunate Prime Minister than any of his predecessors – he is facing a union movement he can do business with.

But that, in itself, demands a responsible response from ministers. It is easier than it has ever been to ignore the unions, or view them with disdain. But they still represent a substantial slice of the population, and seem to be determined to limit themselves to that role. There was no grand posturing on wider political questions in Blackpool.

The unions have not made statements even on welfare reform, which is one of the big political issues. What a contrast to the era when the political world held its breath, as it awaited their latest declaration on unilateral nuclear disarmament. So when they put their cases on public sector pay and recruitment, they do so with genuine feeling and with some regret: they do not want to take on this government.

At the very least, they deserve to be listened to very seriously. If Mandelson had spent the full week in Blackpool, he would have known warnings about the Government not being a "soft touch" were superfluous. Neither he, nor Eddie George, entered a lion's den this week. If the Blackpool conference was a den, it was stuffed full of tame animals.

**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
"To go into the next election defending the grotesque top people's pay awards, without the balance of a fair system of taxation, will mark the most fundamental change in what Labour perceives its mission to be."  
Frank Field, former minister for welfare reform

**THOUGHT FOR THE DAY**  
"Comedy, we may say, is society protecting itself – with a smile."  
JB Priestley, playwright and novelist

ETA'S ANNOUNCEMENT of a complete, indefinite ceasefire should raise no hopes. A careful reading of the paragraph in its statement which says "as yet arms will not be given up, but reserved for defensive reasons" is enough to make that clear. It shows the difference between abandoning violence and an opportunistic declaration aimed at recouping the group's tarnished image among voters. ETA's members don't know any way to make a living apart from kidnapping,

## MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD  
Spanish press comment on ETA's ceasefire



extortion and murder. Sadly, one cannot expect those who scorn life to speak the truth. ABC

WHAT COUNTS with this organisation is not what it says but what it does. If it stops killing, even temporarily and with conditions attached, that is better than not. The peace process in Ireland is definitely an influence. The way the situation there is evolving favours peace in the Basque country. In Northern Ireland bombs and

shootings have lost every trace of heroism: today the image of the activist is closer to that of the criminal who planted the Omagh bomb than to the patriot fighting for an ideal. Perhaps ETA's members, or at least its political arm, have realised that that is their fate if they don't call a halt now: that they will be not the Basque IRA, but the loathed Real version of

Omagh. That ETA should now take the way of peace, leaving the guns to rust, is a possibility, not a certainty. El Pais

THIS IS a victory for political and judicial action. It is a success for this government, which has known how to strike, dealing with ETA without giving in to the temptation to fight a dirty war. And paradoxical as it may seem, we must recognise the part played by the nationalist parties which have

shown the Basque movement that another path was open to them, the path of peace. El Mundo

The reaction of many politicians is not to believe in this, to discount the nationalists' position, and see the ceasefire as a vote-catching strategy. It is hard to forget so much bloodshed, but it would not come amiss, this once, to give good faith a chance and for all of us to look for peace instead of for victory. Diorio 16

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## PANDORA

THE TUC President John Edmonds' attack on greedy bosses will no doubt be the enduring moment of this year's Blackpool conference. Unsurprisingly, Edmonds was not pleased about the unflattering photograph of himself that first appeared in the *London Evening Standard* on Monday, and in most of the other papers the following day (although not *The Independent*). On Tuesday, Edmonds attended a dinner for Tony Blair at the *Standards Hotel*. In the hotel's lift, a friend enquired after the union leader's well being. Edmonds complained of his hectic schedule, but added: "I'd like to get my hands round the throat of one particular photographer." Fat cats should watch their necks; the Blackpool Strangler is born.

IN WASHINGTON, the sex-obsessed Starr report has lowered the tone of American political journalism, and it's not only the President who's feeling the heat. In the past two weeks, three Republican leaders have been forced to admit to sexual indiscretions after journalists confronted them, according to *The Washington Post*. Most important is House Judiciary Committee chairman, Henry J Hyde, currently heading the pre-impeachment hearings. He has just admitted to a five-year affair with a married woman, back in the Sixties. While Republicans have accused Clinton's team of instigating these stories, the White House strenuously denies involvement. One Texas Republican Congressman called the story about Hyde: "The most despicable, most disgraceful, most disgusting piece of rumour mongering that I have ever seen." Where has he been for the past eight months?

THE US embassy in London has just replenished its fleet of cars. Cadillac? No, Robin Reliants. The embassy bought a fleet of the three-wheeled vehicles last year, and has just added two more, at the bargain price of £7,050 each. The sight of a Reliant with diplomatic plates may be strange, but the embassy is not bothered: "We are amused by the attitude to these cars," US spokesman Dennis Wolf told Car

magazine. He points out that these vehicles, nifty on London's crowded roads, are used by delivery and repair staff, not for ferrying Ambassador Philip Lader to Buckingham Palace.

AS TOPSHOP prepares to open its new Oxford Circus flagship on 3 October, London is wallpapered with a sleek upmarket ad campaign for the retail chain. The brains behind Topshop's new "Can't live without..." marketing effort belong to Ronnie Cooke Newhouse, wife of Condé Nast International chief, Jonathan Newhouse. Mrs Newhouse made her mark in New York as the brilliant creative director for Barney's department store and, in 1997, landed the job as creative director of Calvin Klein's in-house advertising agency. The latter required her to commute constantly between New York and the couple's Notting Hill home. After just a year, Ronnie gave up the Klein job to open her own London agency - RCN Associates - in order to spend more time with Jonathan. "Can't live without..." indeed.

LYNN FRANKS, the delightful PR consultant who helped to inspire the loopy television sitcom *Absolutely Fabulous*, was holding forth in Los Angeles recently at a New Age bookstore. She made the audience hold hands as she informed them that they were in "the global fusion business", and how important it was "to be connected to the Earth". In the Eighties, Franks's work for Absolut Vodka was an absolute triumph. One of her American clients is Sky Vodka. That doesn't sound very earthy, but clearly Lynn has celestial hopes for the product.

CYBILL SHEPHERD (pictured) has laid bare some hairy details about Bruce Willis, her former co-star in the hit TV series *Moonlighting*. At a New York magazine party this week, Shepherd said that she intended to dedicate part of her forthcoming book, *Cybill Disobedience*, to Bruce Willis's bottom. Apparently, Willis was forever dropping his pants and mooning on the *Moonlighting* set. Shepherd claims she asked Willis to warn her, so that she could gird herself for the sight. She suggests that Willis "could probably use some of that hair now on his head".

## Who's making toast if not the nurse?



HUNTER DAVIES

*The patients seemed the same as always - all reading 'The Sun', all with tattoos*

I CAME out of hospital yesterday, a minor op, no problems, no flowers please. All went well, thank you for asking, just a bit being chopped off my foot. What was interesting was the change in hospitals since the last time I was in, 20 years ago, for a cartilage op.

At that time, every doctor I saw was a Brit, floating through the ward in a high state, and a smart suit, ever so impressive, not to say pompous, while every nurse who looked after me was foreign - West Indian, Australian or Irish. This time, every doctor I saw was foreign. They appeared to be Egyptian or Arab, judging by their names and their accents. While all the nurses were local Brits, born and living in the immediate area.

Not a true comparison, of course, because they were different hospitals. This time I have been in the West Cumberland hospital in Whitehaven. Last time, 20 years ago, I was in a leading teaching hospital in London, the Royal Free.

Lots of other things have changed in 20 years. The waiting list for a start. I hardly seemed to wait for my cartilage op, but this time I

seem to have been waiting for ever. Well, a year to be precise. Labour, when they came to power, promised to get the waiting time down, but have so far failed. Which is just as well. I was dreading the call coming during the World Cup. Then what would I have done?

I was in for only one night and two days, but straight away, I was aware of the shortages. There appeared to

be only one staff nurse in the part of the ward I was in, looking after 12 beds. She was never still, always doing several things at once, but she did manage to come with me down the corridor, and up in the lift to the operating theatre for my cheilectomy operation.

The patients seemed much the same as last time - all reading *The Sun*, all with tattoos - but then I was in the male half of an orthopaedics ward again, along with lots of blokes suffering from football injuries. One nurse, seeing me read *The Independent* in the morning, asked why I hadn't gone private. I said I was against private schools and private health, believing that all education and health should be free. Also, I'm bloody mean.

"Oh well, everyone to their opinion," she said. "But you would have had it done much earlier."

Too true. Last September, I was told I could have my op in three weeks, perhaps even three days, if I went private. Otherwise, it would be a year. Not a hard choice, really, as I wasn't in agony, just discomfort, unable to wear shoes, though the pain was getting worse.

The present shortages are, of course, affecting the Royal Free as well as West Cumberland, resulting in more and more foreign staff coming in, if they can find them. Over three quarters of the nation's hospitals have at present got vacancies they can't fill, according to the BBC yesterday, which has got some leads from a forthcoming NHS Confederation report.

Up till now, the West Cumberland Hospital has not had too much of a problem recruiting nursing staff. Nigel Woodcock, Chief Executive, confirmed what I had observed - that the nursing staff are almost all local. They tend not to want to move away, because of family ties, and there aren't so many local jobs for women anyway.

Their big problem is among doctors and consultants, hence all the foreign doctors. He said the proportion was particularly high in orthopaedics. Overall, some 25 per cent of their consultants were from overseas. But finding doctors, from anywhere, is a continual headache.

"The problem generally is that there are not enough British medical graduates, and of the ones who

do quality, there is a large fall-out. Medicine seems to have lost a lot of its appeal. We have extra problems here because we are geographically remote. We often find that our main attraction in recruiting is the Lake District. People take jobs with us so they can go out walking."

"We have just appointed a consultant anaesthetist and consultant psychiatrist - and in each case the interviewing process was very easy - we had only one applicant for each job."

As a patient, though, I have no complaints. All went well. My op was fine, though I was a bit alarmed just as I was about to be wheeled into the operating theatre to see a clergyman arrive in the ward, dressed all in black, carrying a large Bible. I tried to hide under the bed clothes, but he came across to my bed and spoke to me - in an American accent. I thought my ears were playing tricks. You just don't get Americans in west Cumberland. He used to be a New York cop, he said. Now he's vicar of Beckenmet. Seems that the Church, as well as our hospitals, is having some problems recruiting people...

## The reality is that intelligent life is probably out there



ANDREW LYNE

*A belief in the existence of extraterrestrial life is often as personal as religious conviction*

AT THE Nuffield Radio Astronomy Laboratories at Jodrell Bank this week a major new collaborative research project has begun. Together with colleagues from the SETI Institute in Mountain View, California, astronomers are attempting to detect faint radio signals from intelligent life elsewhere in our Galaxy.

This research, called Project Phoenix, uses the University of Manchester's 76-metre Lovell radio telescope and the 305-metre US radio telescope based at Arecibo, in Puerto Rico. By using two telescopes it is possible to discriminate between signals of an extraterrestrial nature and those that are from within the Solar System. This will be the most sensitive and comprehensive search for extraterrestrial signals ever carried out.

Whether or not we are alone in the universe is a question that has vexed humankind for many centuries. But we are privileged to live in an era where the technology exists to make a serious attempt at its resolution. A belief in the existence of extraterrestrial life is often as personal as religious conviction and perhaps as much based on faith. But scientifically the possibility cannot be discounted, and perhaps more than any other time in history, the subject can rightly be regarded as a respectable discipline.

Before we even begin such a search we must address the question of whether there is some chance of success. For example, can we estimate the number of civilisations within our own Milky Way galaxy? This is a question that has been asked many times, but scientists now believe they now have a reasonable knowledge of the factors involved in producing such civilisations.

The rate of formation of suitable stars - that is, ones which are hot enough to sustain life and live long

enough to allow life to evolve - is a crucial starting-point. Astronomers can easily assess this rate of formation at about one star per year. However, these stars also need to have habitable planets.

Only in the last five years has astronomical science found evidence that at least some stars (other than our own star, the Sun) have planetary systems. Current belief is that perhaps one in 10 stars have planets orbiting them. But we also require that these planets are warm enough to have liquid water, a basic component of life on Earth and presumably life elsewhere, and are large enough to retain an atmosphere that can both provide protection and sustenance to developing life.

Next we must assess the fraction of these suitable planets that actually develop life. Since life developed on Earth almost as soon as conditions were right, it is reasonable to suppose that life would form on any such suitable planet. But we cannot assume that these lifeforms will evolve into "intelligent" beings. It

took 3,000 million years for intelligent beings to develop on Earth, which may mean the process is difficult and therefore uncommon. But it may be reasonable to assume that any intelligent lifeforms will then go on to develop the necessary technology with which to attempt interstellar communication.

The final critical question is how long such an advanced civilisation survives. Humankind has only been transmitting radio signals since the 1920s and if our civilisation were destroyed tomorrow, through our own negligence or some natural catastrophe, we would only have existed as an "intelligent civilisation" for a tiny fraction of the lifetime of the Earth.

It may be that other civilisations in the universe come and go in this way, sparking into existence for only a brief time. Then our chances of detecting these civilisations is very small. But if these civilisations can exist for millions of years, we have a good chance of finding at least some of them. Given optimistic guesses, where possible based on scientific and sociological evidence, most predictions imply there would be many thousands of such civilisations. Our searches will only be successful if some of these have a willingness to attempt to communicate with others.

The present attempt at detection is technically the most sophisticated and comprehensive search yet performed. The advanced radio receivers used at Jodrell Bank and Arecibo detect a broad band of radio frequencies. This band is split up into hundreds of millions of very narrow channels, each one only 1 Hz wide. Computers then search each channel simultaneously for patterns in frequency or time that indicate whether a continuous or pulsed signal is present. Any prominent candidate signals are then



Models of ETs alleged to have landed in New Mexico in 1947

looked at more closely to determine their origin and nature.

We are looking for a signal that is obviously coming from beyond the Solar System and which cannot be due to any known natural process. Obviously, signals from other distant civilisations are likely to be very faint, so Project Phoenix concentrates on star systems relatively close by, within about 200 light years of Earth.

Those involved in this kind of research have no hidden agenda. Strict protocols for announcing discoveries to both the scientific community and the media are already in place. The detection of a signal from another civilisation would surely have a profound global impact. Studies to assess the public's likely reaction to such a discovery have concluded there would be confusion and excitement but little panic or hysteria.

But the world is unlikely to change radically overnight; rather, a slow realisation and yearning for more information is likely to follow. We will know very little about this extraterrestrial life. We have no way of knowing how such life may

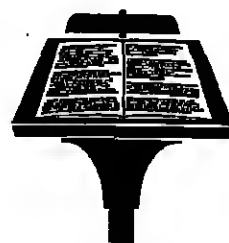
differ or be similar to us and we must consider the possibility that the civilisation might not be benign before we attempt communication.

We must bear in mind that any signals we send in reply will take many years, perhaps centuries, to reach their destination. This would be perhaps the most frustrating part of our greatest revelation.

It is difficult to assess the chances of success for Project Phoenix. Since the experiment is targeting only nearby stars, we would be fortunate indeed to find them this time around. However, if we don't attempt such a search our chances of success are zero. Failure, if it comes, will not necessarily mean we are alone, perhaps only that we have not yet looked hard enough. In that case we should look to the prospects of future generations attempting to answer this same question. But if we succeed, it will represent the greatest discovery we shall ever make.

The author is director of the Nuffield Radio Astronomy Laboratories at Jodrell Bank.

## No U-turn on the free trade road



PODIUM

GORDON BROWN

*From a speech by the Chancellor to the Federation of Bankers' Associations, Tokyo*

MY VISIT today, representing the British Government, the current chair of the G7, reaffirms the partnership between the G7 countries as an indisputable foundation for international stability and prosperity. Our shared commitment to open trade and orderly progress among the G7 has been a driving force for growth - even in countries that not so long before seemed likely to be permanently left behind.

Now the trend is stalled, and in some places even reversed - but I believe that is a temporary setback, not a permanent condition.

I believe that the essential answer to the problems of the moment is not less globalisation - not new national structures to separate and isolate economies - but stronger international structures to make globalisation work in harder times as well as easy ones. Our urgent need is closer co-operation, continuing dialogue, and an unwavering commitment to open commerce. We must not let temporary instability put global progress at risk.

As the economic weather

turns, as a storm in one region threatens to spread, there are easy but dangerous shelters - a return to protectionism, the breakdown of co-operation, the rise of beggar-thy-neighbour policies. But this can only yield further deterioration, not renewed growth.

All countries must actively work together to sustain domestic demand and maintain open markets for investment and trade upon which our shared prosperity depends. What is necessary is closer international co-operation to achieve stability and sustained growth, open trade and strengthened financial systems.

Irreversible global economic integration in capital and now also product markets has been accompanied by impressive growth in the world economy. During the 1990s, global output has expanded by an average of over 3 per cent each year, with developing countries growing at an average of 6 per cent and countries in Asia by an average of 8 per cent.

The first priority for Asia is to restore a platform of economic stability on which growth depends. The economic situation in much of

Asia remains difficult, as the slowdown is turning out to be greater than expected. But progress has been made in restoring economic stability in some of the countries directly affected by the crisis, through full and timely implementation of the necessary reforms, in conjunction with the IMF. In both Thailand and Korea, we have seen significant currency appreciation this year, and this has allowed

interest rates to be reduced to below pre-crisis levels.

I also want to mention the vital contribution which China is making to global financial stability. Its policy of maintaining a stable exchange rate is an important and responsible one in difficult times.

As our recent statement made clear, G7 countries, as well as the IMF and the World Bank, stand ready to support countries in all emerging markets which are prepared to embark on a course of strong and sound policy action. Of course, for the IMF to do this and be ready to help in times of crisis, it needs adequate resources now. I am glad to say that the British Government has taken action to play its part in doing this, and I urge others to do the same as a matter of urgency.

In Russia, economic progress can only be secured if there is political stability and a genuine commitment to both stabilisation and structural reform. As the G7 officials discussed at their meeting in London earlier this week, the international community remains ready to cooperate further with Russia in support of sustained ef-

forts towards stabilisation and reform.

Vigilance is required not just in domestic macroeconomic policy but also in trade policy. We must guard against the risk that worries over cheap imports from Asia will encourage misguided calls for a retreat into protectionism.

We need to move quickly to a new round of trade talks that will take multilateral liberalisation forward, not backwards. We shall be looking critically at our own rules and measures. For example, The Voluntary Restraint Agreement on Japanese car exports to the UK expires at the latest at the end of 1999. The UK is and will remain firmly committed to the liberalisation of the UK and EU car markets.

We must never forget that the path of open trade and open capital markets that we have travelled in the last 30 or 40 years has brought unprecedented growth, greater opportunity and a better life for people across the world. No sensible policy-maker wants to turn the clock back to protectionism. We must make markets work - in tough times as well as easy ones.

THIS WEEK IN  
THE INDEPENDENT  
ON SUNDAY

## Scotland at the crossroads

It's a year since the Scots said 'Yes' to devolution, and support for the Scottish National Party - and independence - is growing. The ultimate consequences could shatter the United Kingdom. In a special edition of the *Sunday Review*, writers including Tom Nairn, Pat Kane, and Ian Bell explore what is going on north of the border, politically, culturally and economically



# Drop dead, gorgeous



SUZANNE MOORE

*Models represent our times because they reflect our own shallowness. No wonder we hate them*

THERE WAS a time before the mid-Eighties when the word "model" was used as a job description. Now it is used to describe a state of grace bestowed on a clutch of successful women who do not just do modelling, but are models. How this has come about, and why zeitgeist surfers such as a writer like Jay McInerney see the model as "the representative figure of our times", may be worth pondering.

The person least likely to enlighten us on this score has been given three hours of television time to do so. I am referring to the photographer David Bailey who knows all there is to know about models because he has married a few, photographed loads and slept with millions. Asking Bailey to examine the modelling industry is like asking the bloke down the pub to analyse the current state of the NHS because he happens to have a thing about women in nurses' uniform.

Models Close-up was revealing mainly because of its extraordinary lack of interest in revealing anything that we did not already know. You may be surprised, for instance, to find out that models have to have a certain "something", that sleazy guys prey upon them, that they drink champagne all the time and fly around the world, but I cannot say that I was.

Bailey, who is a "geezer" and therefore obviously not a sleaze ball, was filmed with a sly playboy whose main claim to fame was that he too had slept with lots of models. "Join the club" these revolting men wheezed at each other. Meanwhile "the models or girls or whatever you like to call them", as Bailey helpfully explained, were interviewed except one who didn't turn up - Linda Evangelista - who claimed she was having a panic attack. Perhaps Linda was going through some sort of existential crisis or she was having a bad hair day. Perhaps she just could not be bothered to get out of bed for Channel 4 and darling, can you blame her?

Those who could be bothered wheeled out the same old stories. How Kate Moss got discovered at the airport, how Cindy and Christy and Helena wised up to the financial predators all slicing off their 10 per cent. How naughty Naomi was



Models parade down a New York catwalk for the finale of a Donna Karan show

a monster who split with her agency or how the important thing about her was her "blackness". The fashion world, we are told, can't really deal with blackness, which is a shame because fashion writers won't be able to inform us that blackness is the new whiteness.

If modelling is a superficial industry where nothing matters except what you look like, how come the myth is still perpetuated that looks are not everything, that you have to have an extra talent or ability to make it to the top?

For this is what the magazines tell us and women's magazines are full of stories of models who were once ugly ducklings, of unusual beauties who were not appreciated until one particular scout saw them on the street. All this feeds into the sad fantasy that any of us could be a model even if we are too short, too fat, too ugly. A lot of money is made out of these wannabes who pay to be humiliated. Still, I guess no man ever made it with the chat-up line "Has anyone ever told you that you could never be a model?"

Just as the Spice Girls' popularity was premised on their individual "personalities", so too the supermodels have become brand names. They do not just model anymore. They make exercise videos, write novels, get their bits parts in movies.

The pointless search to insist that they have some sort of depth is fascinating to behold. Here is Naomi with Nelson Mandela. The one world leader with a residue of integrity is happy these days to lend it to those who need to be taken a bit more seriously - models, Spice Girls, whatever. All those years in prison, not just to liberate people, but to provide the best PR on the planet for those whose image needs a little, shall we say, moral uplift.

I never understood the fuss about models until I went into a fashion show and there I was totally swept away. They are indeed fabulous aliens, not like the rest of us at all. They are trained to walk in the weirdest way possible by gay men, they are never given food, they cry a lot but claim to be having the best time and, yes, they are gorgeous beyond belief. They do live in a world where all that is solid melts into air. Look, here is Christy Turlington in a new glossy ad, lovelier than ever. The caption reads: "She is always and never the same." This is designed to sell Calvin's fragrance called Contradiction. Geddit? See, Christy changes and yet she is still Christy. I cannot wait for his new perfume, which will have a picture of Amber Valletta and the slogan "Women? Funny chaps aren't they?" Gibberish by Calvin Klein.

Yet what fascinates us about models is this very unreality. They sell the surface of themselves and we both reward and resent them for that. As Brett Easton Ellis, author of *American Psycho*, said, "I have very sinister and angry feelings about models, especially the kind of reactions they inspire in people, including myself." It is symptomatic that it takes a controversial novelist to expose the dark side of our fascination, for it is true that models do make a lot of people very angry. We are angry that we do not look like them, that we cannot be them. We are angry that we cannot have them. We are angry that they are too thin and too stupid to be good role models for our girls. We are angry that they make so much money for doing so little. We are angry that they are part of a business which reduces everything to image. We are angry, when all is said and done, that life is so unfair, that some are born beautiful and some are not. Models undermine the idea that with enough hard work anyone can achieve their dream. Models remind us that whatever we might tell ourselves that it is not enough to be beautiful on the inside. Those most enthralled by models, though, are not the likes of Bailey and the superannated routes he interviewed, but other women. Occasionally Cindy, Naomi and Claudia appear to make a boring car seem more glamorous, but on the whole their business comes from advertising clothes, make-up and perfume that is consumed by women.

Where can we read those all-important interviews with supermodels? Where can we find their tips for packing light? Where can we find gossip about their fantastic love lives? In women's magazines. To reduce the role of a model, then, to sex objects is not to understand their appeal at all. If younger and younger girls are being consumed by the fashion industry then that is because those who sell make-up to middle-aged women know that it looks best on luminous skin. Indeed, it is women who make many of the key decisions in this industry about what is beautiful and what is not. The business of saturating us with impossible and unrealistic models is the fault of women as much as men.

Yet while in many fields women are pushing forward, we remain mesmerised by women whose success is entirely dependent on appearance, on being passively objectified, on the stimulation of desire. If the model is the representative of our times it is because she releases us from the responsibility of having to see beyond the image: she reflects our own shallowness back to us. No wonder we hate her.

## RIGHT OF REPLY

RAJENDRA SHARMA



The medical director of the Hale Clinic, London, responds to criticisms of alternative medicine

THE REPORTING of the death of a nine-year-old girl with a brain tumour having used an alternative treatment may not be the whole story. Many tumours don't respond to orthodox therapy; many patients die because of chemo- or radiotherapy. Neurosurgery is very risky. Were the parents advised correctly? Was their decision made because of fear of orthodox treatments?

No reputable practitioner would endorse herbal treatments for a cancer that was potentially treatable such as Hodgkin's disease. So are these examples a problem with the therapy or the therapist? To vilify all alternative practitioners seems premature and unfair - a hit like suggesting all surgeons are incompetent because of the failings of three surgeons recently.

Eastern medicines do contain drugs such as salicylic acid (aspirin) but "undeclared pharmaceuticals" suggests contamination. This is unacceptable but it is also unavoidable. The proliferation of pesticides may be contaminating medication that has for thousands of years been used safely. Blame the practitioner or industry?

Lead poisoning from Indian herbs is possible. However, was the patient taking the recommended dose? Most of the 800 million sub-continent herbal users do not have lead poisoning. Such figures must be compared with the 2,000-plus deaths that occurred in England from over-the-counter drugs (reported in *The Big Issue*, summer 1997).

We need constructive advice not scare-mongering by medical journals. It is happening. The Kings Fund is one example. If we are going to make it all safe, it will take time and we thank the *New England Journal of Medicine* for helping emphasise the need.

# The satyr who became a martyr

## FRIDAY BOOK

RFK: A CANDID BIOGRAPHY  
BY C DAVID HEYMANN, HEINEMANN, £20



TEMPORA, OMNES: or as Bill Clinton would say, "Why wasn't I president 30 years earlier?" The customs of those who occupy high office in America have not greatly changed over the years: infidelity, betrayal and serial philandering seem to be a permanent part of the job description. But the times have changed. Back then, a Kennedy or a Johnson could sin safely in the knowledge his deeds would be passed over in silence. Today, a few trysts in a corridor off the Oval Office, and 12 months later every last lewd detail is on the Internet, courtesy of a special prosecutor and the US Government printing office.

Which brings me to Bobby Kennedy, the last of three princely brothers to get the muckraker's belated treatment. Five years ago, Joe McGinniss did the business on Teddy Kennedy in the perfectly awful *The Lost Brother*. A few months back, Seymour Hersh dispatched JFK more elegantly in *The Dark Side of Camelot*. Now it is Bobby's turn. Alas, any hope that David Heymann's opus on the most interesting of the

male siblings will earn a place on the shelf of great political lives is dashed before you even open it by the publisher's promise of a book that "will make President Clinton look like a choirboy". And amazingly, even after the revelations of the Starr report, the claim is not unreasonable. *RFK: A Candid Biography* is not for those suffering from scandal-fatigue.

Bobby Kennedy was eight years younger than the assassinated President to whose service he would devote his life. They were each other's best man. They shared their ambitions, their triumphs and their women. He would be JFK's campaign

manager and closest political consigliere. The purpose of his own run for the White House was to pick up the torch of his fallen brother.

As a boy, he was the tough little runt of the litter, so competitive he would throw himself into the sea to learn to swim and keep up with his elder siblings. As a man he was cold, ruthless and utterly loyal to the family - "as driven in politics as he was in bed," a paramour would later remark. But after Jack's death in 1963, a remarkable transformation occurred. Not that Bobby became soft. But he learnt that most others were less fortunate than himself. The doomed 10-week candidacy of 1968 was nothing so much as a crusade for America's oppressed.

Heymann's main concern, sadly, lies elsewhere. For in this puritan and iconoclastic age, what is a Kennedy without his pants down? RFK seems to have been a mile less promiscuous than his elder brother: he did father 11 children by the same woman, to JFK's two. But, if a quarter of the tales recounted here are to be believed, Bobby too made his lecherous old father proud. And back in those days, no one outside the magic inner circle had an inkling.

Some of the claims are breathtaking. Bobby's liaison with Marilyn Monroe is well known. Less well known is his affair with the widowed Jackie Kennedy as well as with a string of other film stars. During the 1968 campaign, an aide allegedly procured him three 15-year-old schoolgirls whom Bobby watched pleasuring each other in his hotel room: "The best present anyone gave me," he is said to have pronounced afterwards. And, plunging even deeper into Sixties sexual liberation, Bobby reputedly had a fling with Rudolf Nureyev. "I saw RFK and Nureyev in a telephone booth," a prima ballerina tells Heymann, "they were kissing passionately."

First prize for carnal virtuosity surely goes to Ellen Rometsch, an East German-born socialist who in 1963 was apparently carrying on



The funeral of Robert Kennedy in 1968

simultaneously with the President, the vice-President and the attorney general - an astounding treble that surely deserved better reward than to be sent back to her home country as a security risk by the FBI.

Beneath this pile of rutting bodies, an epic story is trapped. Only at the end does it emerge, as Kennedy marches victorious to his own murder in the kitchen of a Los Angeles hotel, on the night of 4 June 1968, hours after winning the California primary. Ten days earlier, the French writer Romain Gary was in town, predicting to RFK's aides that, "Your guy will be killed... he's too irresistible a temptation to the American paranoid personality, too rich, too young, too successful." Bobby Kennedy himself brushed off the warning, pointing out that De Gaulle by then had survived half a dozen attempts to kill him. "Luck," he mused. "You can't make it without that old bitch luck."

But such moments are rare. Thirty years have passed since Bobby Kennedy died, long enough to form a balanced judgement of this complicated, driven man. Yet we receive no coherent assessment of the spiritual transformation of RFK, only chunks of indigestible reportage where the puritan usually drives out the profound, and a torrent of quotes from other people expressing their conflicting opinions of RFK. Bobby Kennedy still awaits his biographer.

RUPERT CORNWELL

## FRIDAY POEM

JUDAS  
BY STANLEY MOSS

Judas, patron saint of bankers  
I run an internal revenue service, audit me.  
For my losses carried forward more than a half century  
allow only the last five years as deduction.  
Call my write-off for Tuscan travel  
and business entertainment, mere pleasure trips.  
There is a difference between writing, rewriting  
and cooking the books. Accounting in the dark  
I have mortgaged more than my house,  
my heart pays usurious interest.  
To whom is such a price paid, to what treasury?  
Judas, your God with his small coins  
of good and evil lends Himself to fictions.  
I am in the market for bracelets,  
chains, necklaces and rings of illumination.

From Stanley Moss's *Asleep in the Garden: new and selected poems* (Anvil, £9.95). Anvil celebrates its 30th birthday this autumn. Our poems this week come from its latest titles

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# André Fougeron

ANDRÉ FOUGERON was the foremost socialist realist painter in France. With an admirable tenacity he maintained his belief in painting's duty to comment on the social injustices of the day, from Third World famine to contemporary police brutality and racism. "De la négritude" was the title of a 1994 exhibition at the Galerie Jacques Barbier.

As a very young art historian, I met André Fougeron in 1979 while involved with the retrospective exhibition at the Pompidou Centre: "Paris-Paris, Créations en France 1937-1957". This necessarily included coverage of the Occupation years and the socialist realist period in French art by a national institution. Fougeron was the most patient of tutors; his remarkable story was a parallel of French cultural history during the post-war and Cold War decades.

Born in 1913, to a working-class family, Fougeron completed primary-school education and worked as a metallurgist in the Renault factory, among other jobs, before facing unemployment. Like so many autodidact artists who were later to become his comrades-in-arms during the French Communist Party's cultural offensives, Fougeron was welcomed to the "Maison de la Culture". Founded after the riots of February 1934, this was the powerhouse for a united Left front of intellectuals and artists in Paris.

Subsequent to the Stalin-Laval pact of 1935 and no small degree of Comintern involvement with Franco-Soviet relations at the time, it became the forum for the poet Louis Aragon's 1935 lecture published as "Pour un réalisme socialiste" and the famous "realism quarrel" of 1936 (Anthony Hunt assisted as British representative). Fougeron's work at this time was influenced by André Masson, German expressionism and Picasso, for whom he had great admiration; *Death and Hunger*, Spain, was exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants of 1937, and launched his professional career.

Fougeron joined the Communist Party after the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact in 1939. Demobilised, during the Occupation of Paris he became one of the so-called "young painters of the French tradition", his colourful canvases becoming closer to Matisse. Simultaneously he was the driving force behind the Front National des Arts, at the forefront of French intellectual resistance.

He printed clandestine journals including *L'Art Français* and the album of lithographs *Vaincre*, a collaborative work containing explicit denunciations of Hitler and concentration camps, but also Pétain and French collaborationist brutalities. At the Liberation, Fougeron became the force behind *Épuration* in the arts; on the death of the veteran painter Maurice Denis in 1943, Fougeron asked Picasso to become President of the Front National des Arts, and thus nominally responsible for many punishments under the purge programme.

In May 1947, France accepted



Fougeron's three-by-four-metre *Transatlantic Civilisation* was exhibited in 1953 to huge controversy. The painting marked both his apotheosis and downfall

American aid for reconstruction and the Marshall Plan. In response, Moscow launched a range of cultural initiatives and a concerted programme of socialist realism together with the international peace movement symbolised by Picasso's dove.

At the very moment when the French Communist Party was required to leave government, its cultural spokesman, Louis Aragon, prefaced an album of Fougeron's drawings, denouncing the international abstraction of the current Unesco exhibition: "André Fougeron, in each one of your drawings the destiny of the world... is at stake...". Fougeron became the official Communist painter. The Party espoused the "cult of personality": Fougeron's portrait of the Party leader Maurice Thorez's mother was in pure Stalinist tradition. Yet Picasso had joined the Party with great fanfare in December 1944; his line drawings of Thorez, together with contributions from Fernand Léger, for example, lent authority to many Party exhibitions where subject matter was

doctrinaire and painting ranged from the amateur to the banal.

Fougeron's painting led the way against the modernists with panache. The colourful *Parisians at the Market*, 1948, showed poor working class women haggling over fish prices. Over 40,000 people saw the huge canvas *Homage to André Houlès*, Communist Militant Murdered at the age of 54. *White Flying-Posting Anti-war Tracts*, which dominated the exhibition held in honour of Stalin's 70th birthday in December 1949, prior to its departure among trainloads of birthday presents to the Soviet Union for display at the Pushkin Museum.

While every political move was Moscow-approved, the French Communist Party used revolutionary rhetoric to promote a patriotic image. Fougeron was proud to be appointed as a contemporary Jacques-Louis David in the wake of David's bicentennial retrospective in Paris in 1948 and Party celebrations of the 125th anniversary of his death in 1950. Fougeron's *Mining Country* series, exhibited the following year, showed

this notion of a revolutionary French history painting at its most developed; the characteristic "miserabilism" of socialist realism together with its eschatological dimensions – the dead miner spread out like Holbein's *Christ* – was curiously combined with the lesson of contemporary photojournalism. Willy Rottis would later photograph Fougeron's model, a crippled miner, in the same pose as Fougeron's *Pensioner of the Mining Country* series.

While the works of Ronis or Robert Doisneau, skilled reportage at the time, now have an international market, Fougeron's paintings of this series, shown in the chic Galerie Bernheim-Jeune before touring not only the major French mining centres but the capitals of Eastern Europe, have almost all been lost or destroyed.

Fougeron continued to paint disturbing and provocative pictures at a period when Party strategy was to precipitate police intervention and "décochages" – the taking down of paintings – at official Salons. Subsequently, *French Peasants Defend*

their Soil and American Occupation of 1953 were violently anti-American. Fougeron tragically miscalculated his value, however, later in 1953 in the wake of Stalin's death. His public rejection of Picasso's obituary portrait of Stalin, a drawing published in *Les Lettres Françaises*, misfired; the Party realised its modernist painters, Picasso and Léger, were its passport to intellectual rehabilitation.

*Transatlantic Civilisation*, Fougeron's massive canvas exhibited only once at the Salon d'Automne of 1953, marked both his apotheosis and downfall. Louis Aragon now performed a hatchet job; Fougeron tumbled from grace. The Salon was preceded by a retrospective of Mexican mural painting in Paris. The Mexican government had banned the export of Diego Rivera's mural *Nightmare of War and Dream of Peace* (Stalin and Mao confronting American and British top-hatted capitalists grouped with a baffled, female, Republican France).

Fougeron, working with the same ambition as Rivera or Renato Guttuso in Italy, decided to abandon his

miserabilist palette and adopted the colliding spaces of the muralists. Dominated by the electric chair used to execute the Soviet spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, the dialectic between left and right, male and female, good and evil, joy and despair, new life and death rotates around the blue American car that explicitly makes an elision between American capitalism, and the Nazi occupation of France. The American Nalo building in Paris is plastered with recruitment posters for the Korean war; French mothers mourn their dead; pensioners are unhoused while American soldiers lounge in decadent luxury. Yet in a France coming to terms with modernisation, any idea of a Soviet alternative in 1953-54 was risible. While the tergiversations of the Party in the wake of Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin's crimes were yet to come, it was perhaps the very lucidity of Fougeron's exposé at this moment which was intolerable in and outside the French Communist Party.

Fougeron continued to exhibit; canvases on the Algerian war and

Vietnam followed, while his reputation in the Eastern bloc remains undiminished. The photomontage artist John Heartfield welcomed him officially to the Neue Berliner Galerie in 1968, and Fougeron helped with the organisation of Heartfield's major retrospective in France in 1974. Fougeron, Taslitzky and the socialist realist movement still tended to dominate accounts of postwar European painting written in the Soviet Union by art historians such as Mikhail Lifshitz.

Fougeron's rehabilitation as a historical figure began in 1981. In 1982, besides the veteran Surrealist Roberto Matta, Fougeron was the only living artist to come to see his work in "Aftermath: new images of man, France 1944-1954", which inaugurated the Barbican Art Gallery. Surrounded by colourful paintings by Matisse, Bonnard and Picasso, Fougeron's 1950 painting *The Judges* (a row of mutilated miners stares out of the canvas, accusing the patrons of industry for their plight) none the less dominated coverage of the exhibition.

Throughout the 1980s Fougeron's work was seen regularly in France and in the Galerie Tonielli in Italy. In 1987 the gallerist Jean-Jacques Dutko gave him a large show whose catalogue reproduced many important early paintings.

During his last 10 years, however, when far less interesting School of Paris painters were granted Grand Palais retrospectives, Fougeron became increasingly frustrated by the fact that he would never see a full retrospective of his own art. The Pompidou Centre's decision not to show *Transatlantic Civilisation* – even temporarily – during the run of its international art and politics show, "Face à l'histoire 1933-1996", was pusillanimous. The highly censored presentation of France's socialist realist period here demonstrated a continuing embarrassment and silence around many uncomfortable memories and issues still very much alive.

Fougeron was painting, drawing and exhibiting, despite severe problems with his vision, until the recent onset of Alzheimer's disease. His French obituaries are quite wrong to think he is forgotten; a new generation of Anglo-American scholarship is emerging and the artist's granddaughter Lucie Fougeron has been working in the recently opened French Communist Party archives; revelations are forthcoming. *Transatlantic Civilisation* entered the mythological life of the nation recently in Pascal Quignard's novel *L'Occupation Américaine* (1994). Fougeron's legacy and importance within cultural studies of France during the post-war and Cold War period rest assured.

SARAH WILSON

André Alfred Fougeron, artist; born Paris 1 October 1913; married Henriette Marecat (died 1992; three sons); died Paris 10 September 1998.

## Horace Charles Jones

### The Enigma

They say that I'm common  
a scoundrel a spiv –  
where others will starve  
they say that I'll live.  
I steal little babies  
away from their nurses  
of course I'm coarse  
I bloody-well curse –  
but the one thing they'll not say  
though by jimminy they know it,  
'tis the fact that I am a first-rate Poet.

from *The Challenger*



THERE IS a living tradition in Wales, and in Ireland and Scotland, of the *bardd gadwal* – the country poet who is called upon to write verses in celebration of local events such as births, marriages and deaths. His function is to praise, to honour, to make the community feel good about itself, often in verse that is witty and sometimes memorable. Many of his poems are carved on tombstones or committed to memory for generations after the events they celebrate have been virtually forgotten.

The tradition is inextricably bound up with the Welsh language and the status of the poet in Welsh-speaking Wales, particularly the rural areas where many can still turn their hand to the writing of verses in *cynghanedd* – the ancient prosody which Gerard Manley Hopkins called "consonantal chiming". Rarely have there been poets of this kind writing in English and they are rarer still in the industrial areas.

Horace Charles Jones turned all this on its head. He wrote in order to offend, to degrade, to make fun, and to castigate those among whom he lived and who, for one reason or another, had upset him. And he was very easily upset, taking umbrage at the slightest hint of criticism and reserving his most vicious spleen for those who did not share his own high opinion of himself as a poet.

I fell out with him in 1963 when I lived in Merthyr Tydfil, the town where he spent most of his life. I had it in mind, as a fledgling publisher, to bring out a small booklet of my poems, together with a selection by Harri Webb, another Merthyr poet, perhaps too dozen in all. When Jones heard about this he called on me to insist that I include him in the project. I was prepared to consider it until I found that he wanted me to print a hundred of his poems, on an all-or-nothing basis. He would not be

persuaded and left my home in high dudgeon, never to speak to me again. When the booklet eventually appeared, he burned a copy in Merthyr's High Street.

What had made Jones think he was a great poet was being taken up by Keidrych Rhys, the editor of the prestigious magazine *Wales*, to whom I had introduced him, and who – in what seemed a temporary lapse of judgement – wrote a fulsome foreword to his first and only hardback collection of verse, *The Challenger* (1966). With this accolade, he would never again doubt that he was as good as Dylan Thomas. The book was published with the help of a grant from the Merthyr Borough Council. Immediately after publication Jones, who always savaged those who tried to help him, took the council to task in the local newspaper for wasting rate-payers' money.

At the time both Harri Webb and I, and Peter Gruffydd, who was to join us as a third contributor to *Triad*, were active members of Plaid Cymru, and now Jones's animus was extended to the party and all its works. He began denouncing Welsh nationalism and became an inveterate writer of vitriolic letters to the newspapers. Between 1976 and 1985, when Plaid Cymru was in control of the Merthyr Borough Council, he voted with his feet and left Wales for England, returning only when the Labour Party, which he detested only a little less warmly, was returned to power in the town.

He also took against the Welsh Arts Council, perhaps because I had joined its staff in 1967, although I do not recall the Literature Committee ever receiving an application from him for financial support. More likely, his suspicion of all Welsh institutions and the grim satisfaction he gained from attacking them fuelled his sense of his own importance. The chapels, the Church in

Wales, BBC Wales and the University of Wales were also among his targets, mainly because he thought they had failed to recognise his talent.

All geniuses are neglected, his argument seemed to run: I am neglected, therefore I am a genius. As for solicitors, magistrates, civil servants, headmasters, bank managers and policemen, he had nothing but bile for them, printing his lampoons at dead of night and circulating them anonymously next day. I once saw him put the witch's hex on someone with whom he disagreed.

Jones had a talent for self-publicity that was encouraged by some sections of the local press. He was usually to be found standing against a lamp-post in Merthyr's High Street where, for a few hours every day, he would harangue anyone who had the slightest connection with the town's public life, from councillors to lollipop ladies. Most ignored him, but some were entertained by his lashing tongue, and a few would egg him on to say ever more outrageous things.

He had a huge repertoire of aphorisms, some of which are memorable: "The best place to bury the hatchet is in your enemy's head" is one that has remained with me; "A nation can be great only when it's hungry" is another. About 200 such one-liners were published as *A Dose of Solis* in 1987. Scottish readers who remember the late Oliver Brown or are familiar with the flying tradition will recognise the genre.

Jones was brought up at Abermors, a poor district of Merthyr. When he was 13, his father was killed in an accident in a coal-mine and the boy left school soon afterwards to

work underground. He received little formal education and it showed, particularly in his lack of self-criticism and his steadfast refusal to read any modern literature. He once told me that he had been given the name Horace but, thinking it not literary enough, had taken to calling himself Charles after the author of *Great Expectations*. It was clear to me that he had never heard of the Latin poet until then.

He was often in trouble with the law and with the townspeople of Merthyr. He used to recount with glee how in 1965 he had been escorted from the field of the National Eisteddfod because someone had spotted a mildly satirical remark about that august festival in one of his pamphlets: "An eisteddfod is a cultural circus where everything is Welsh except the money." He was also fined

for refusing to fill in a form prior to the Census of 1971 because it was, he told the court, "an insidious attempt on my rights as a free man".

He carried a homemade knuckleduster as a precaution against being beaten up by the rougher elements of the pubs and cafés he frequented, although I can't help thinking that in such an easy-going place as Merthyr it was hardly necessary; it was, rather, part of his paranoia, which he cultivated seriously.

The theme of personal liberty and the threat of interference by the state recurred in many of his poems, as in "The Jingle" (1971). He was capable of writing a vivid line but too often went in for the worst kind of word-play and usually ruined the meaning with bizarre syntax. Only one or two of his poems are wholly coherent and none has found a

place in any anthology, although municipal patronage ensured that for a while his books were used in Merthyr's schools. Perhaps his most passable poem is "My River", which was inscribed near a path known as Poet's Walk on the bank of the River Taff that runs through the town.

It must be said that, for the most part, what Jones wrote was the worst kind of doggerel, without the genius of a McGonagall or even the charm of an unlettered versifier or the truly comic talent of a Pam Ayres or Spils Milligan. To have suggested as much while he was alive and kicking would have been to incur his displeasure and a campaign of vilification that few were prepared to risk.

If there was a whiff of brimstone about Jones – someone has said, "Had Satan been a spiv, he would have looked like Jones" – there was also something sad about this venomous man who, with little talent except for controversy, believed himself to be a poet, and was encouraged in that belief by people who were really making fun of him. If he had been an innocent rhymester, like the 19th-century Cockle Poet of Anglesey who believed that Queen Victoria wanted to marry him, it might have been possible to take him seriously. But Jones was marked indelibly by the hatred he felt even for those who relished him at his barmiest.

He may have been one of the last "characters" of the old Merthyr, that raffish, ramshackle town that was the cradle of the Industrial Revolution. But if so, he also marked its demise and, with his passing, will be missed only from that lamp-post in the High Street.

MEIC STEPHENS

Horace Charles Jones, writer; born Merthyr Tydfil, Glamorgan 6 February 1906; married 1928 Delia Griffin (one daughter); died Merthyr Tydfil 12 September 1998.







The Russian multi-billionaire Boris Berezovsky has turned his back on Yeltsin and is calling on him to go. By Anne McElvoy

# Boris, the Kremlin's kingmaker

**B**oris Berezovsky, maker and breaker of Russia's leaders, the multi-billionaire they call Rasputin because his grip on the Kremlin is so mysteriously strong, has just walked through my front door. I told the office not to expect me because I had a Russian oligarch coming round for tea. Eventually, they believed me.

He is in London for one day, a trip intended to explain himself at a time when he is being blamed for kicking loose the political avalanche in Russia. There is certainly some explaining to do. In the past three weeks, he engineered the ousting of a reformist prime minister from power, and brought back the stolid previous incumbent, Viktor Chernomyrdin, who then failed to win parliament's backing. This further undermined Boris Yeltsin's fragile credibility – the same Yeltsin to whom Berezovsky has been advisor, financier and fixer for two years.

The net result is more economic gloom and the flag of reform – at half mast for some time – in tatters. Berezovsky is clearly worried about the turmoil in Moscow, a kind of turmoil too great for even him to control. He wants to meet in a private place. We decide on my house. "That's a good idea," says his PR brightly. "He doesn't want to be too grand." Later, she calls back and asks whether it is at least grand enough to accommodate "the entourage". In Russia, Berezovsky has a personal security force rumoured to be more than 100-strong. Four years ago, a bomb planted beside his car killed his driver. Today he is travelling light, just a chauffeur, a bulky "companion", an interpreter who is scouring the hall cupboard in a vain attempt to find a clothes brush

Here was a head of the Russian government effectively appointed by the country's most influential businessman

and the PR representative. Our guest is late, the tea is getting cold and everyone is edgy.

A very large, very bullet-proof Mercedes pulls up and disgorges the sort of small man invariably described as dapper. A few strands of dark hair are pulled across his forehead. His suit is navy and his tie Hermes. He takes no notice of his surroundings at all, walks straight into the room, declines the tea and gazes at me anticipating the first question.

"Before, I thought that Chernomyrdin would be the man to stabilise the situation in Russia," he says. "But he turned out to be weak. In five years in power, so many debts unpaid to the workers, government debts – he became stale in office. It turned out that he could not really do anything for Russia."

It is less than a month since Berezovsky accompanied Chernomyrdin back into the prime minister's office in the Russian parliament. The symbolism was obvious for all to see – here was a head of the Russian government effectively appointed by the country's most influential businessman. A hostile newspaper printed the sardonic headline, "Berezovsky is now our President".

It seemed like the final triumph for the most prominent of Russia's oligarchs – the ultimate confluence of power and money which has been the sad leitmotif of the country's post-Communist attempt at capitalism. But his grip on the levers of power has been weakened by the defeat of Chernomyrdin in two votes. Yeltsin did not risk a third.

The power of the Communists in the parliament and the revival of pre-Yeltsin figures such as the Central Bank chairman Viktor Geraschenko, known in the international finance community as "the world's worst central banker", and the appointment of the former Soviet planning chief as the economics guru, are unsettling for Russia's tycoons. This is not the way things were supposed to work out. They wanted to get rid of the liberal reformers who believed that the only hope for Russia's fledgling capitalism was to cut the Gordian knot which tied the oligarchs so tightly into power structures in Russia. But having heaved out their enemies, they lost control of what followed.

"I don't think I lost the battle," says Berezovsky. "When he [Chernomyrdin] was reappointed, he did not act as he should. It was a mistake to compromise with the duma [the Russian parliament] about the economic situation [Chernomyrdin sought to gain the support of the Communists by promising 'economic dictatorship']. He showed weakness. I can't support a weak position."

"Chernomyrdin has used up his abilities. Primakov is the better solution for the problem. He has wide backing."

On the subject of Yevgeny Primakov who rose under Gorbachev in the foreign affairs apparatus and became head of the intelligence services under Yeltsin after the post-communist KGB spring-clean – and who is no natural ally of the oligarchs – Mr Berezovsky seems ill at ease at the prospect of a prime minister he did not make himself.

"I realised, after giving it some thought, that he was the best candidate for the post. It's a brave decision. But I don't think that Primakov and his cabinet have any idea how to move forward."

What are the chances of any continu-



Boris Berezovsky: 'It's a question now of stopping Russia collapsing completely'

Tom Pilsdon

tion of reform under Primakov? "Primakov is not a reformer. But he is no supporter of the left either. It is not a question of that. It's a question now of stopping Russia collapsing completely. Maybe there will be reforms again, but only in three, four, five years." Later he adds: "The trouble with people in power is that they are not certain which path to take. They don't know whether to go backward or forward."

There is a peculiar blankness about his manner, a phenomenal concentration with no extraneous gestures. He stares straight at me, unwavering, as if into a camera lens. There is a formidable intelligence in there, but also a vast coldness. His private life is kept secret. Two of his daughters have studied at Cambridge. There may be four other children and a total of three marriages. He has a villa in Cap Ferrat – where the decision was taken to attempt the re-appointment of Chernomyrdin – a mansion in central Moscow and the obligatory luxury dacha.

I ask him about Yeltsin's position. "If Yeltsin cannot be a strong power as president, he should leave office."

Is this a call for the president's resignation? "Today I tell you that this power is no longer there and that Boris Nikolayevich should go. He should go now."

This is his final and absolute abandonment of Yeltsin and not only Boris, but the president's family and in particular, his daughter and adviser, Tatiana Dyachenko, to whom he was so close that they were rumoured to be lovers. Together, Dyachenko and Berezovsky gave Boris Yeltsin the greatest makeover in election history to ensure that he defeated the Communists and Nationalists in the 1996 election. The American-style campaign, with rock concerts and advertising campaigns, saved Yeltsin's neck, although it brought on two heart attacks. After the elections, Berezovsky effectively took control of an unhealthy and increasingly confused president, who appointed him deputy secretary of the powerful Security Council, from

where he has built up what one western intelligence source calls "a private KGB, but more efficient" with access to the secrets of his rivals.

"You were very close to Yeltsin," I say. "But now you desert him. Isn't it a betrayal?"

"You are making a mistake," Berezovsky replies, unblinking. "I was not supporting Boris Nikolayevich personally, just



'If Yeltsin cannot be a strong power as president, he should leave office. This power is no longer there and Boris Nikolayevich should go. He should go now'

the office of the presidency and the reforms. He has used up his abilities."

That phrase again. A friend in need is not Boris Berezovsky.

Who should replace Yeltsin? "There are only two strong men. Aleksandr Lebed (the former general and governor of Krasnoyarsk) and Yuri Luzhkov (mayor of Moscow). To my mind, Lebed is the man for Russia. Lebed re-

alises that you need tough and sometimes harsh decisions, stringently controlled from the centre."

The combination of Primakov, rooted in the shadowy world between foreign policy and intelligence and Lebed, an authoritarian military figure whose attachment to democracy is questionable, is a sorry end to Russia's first attempt to join liberal capitalist democracies.

is the intelligence services and the state apparatus. Earlier this year, Yeltsin, in a brief period of vigour, chafed at what one aide called "Berezovsky's too-warm embrace" and threatened to banish him from the country. But he had not the nerve to disperse with Berezovsky – or perhaps feared the consequences.

Instead, Yeltsin appointed him deputy secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), a post which gave the businessman unlimited access to the heads of state of the former Soviet Republics. He has a lot to offer heads of state facing re-election in the next two years: not least the support of Russian Public Television, which broadcasts across the former USSR. In return, there are state budgets to service, privatisations to run and oil deals to exploit.

Should Primakov strip him of this role in order to assert his own authority, a huge and possibly violent struggle will ensue. On the top of his hand-written notes, I see that item number one is the CIS.

He makes and breaks his friends with an unembarrassed, sociopathic ruthlessness. Was it always like this? Berezovsky started out as an academic, a highly respected mathematician. He took his doctorate in 1984 in applied mathematics – the theory of optimisation and decision making, naturally. His CV is written with Soviet-era dedication to "membership of several international scientific societies" and "over a hundred scientific papers".

But it was the end of the Soviet Union which made him. As one of the sharpest "red managers" in the car industry, he recognised the potential in exploiting the difference between set state prices for cars intended for export and what they could command on the market at home.

Berezovsky set up an auto dealership called Logovaz which has evolved into a mammoth conglomerate described only as "a major financial and industrial group". There is little obvious strategy behind the

adventures of Russia's oligarchs, beyond buy, buy, buy. He has ended up with parts of Aeroflot (profits from foreign ticket sales are said to end up in a Swiss outlet in which he is a shareholder), Russian International Airlines, the newspaper *Nevskaya Gazeta* as well as Russian Public Television (ORT). Considered to be the major shareholder in the oil firm Simeft, he has never confirmed involvement. "Poke a stick into a Russian company at random and you'll find Berezovsky at the end of it," says one investigative journalist in Moscow.

How all this happened is obscure. Berezovsky offers no account, plausible or otherwise, of how he ended up with a business and finance empire valued at £1.8bn. Asked to declare his personal earnings recently, he claimed an income of less than £30,000.

Boris Nemtsov, the brightest of the young reformers brought into the Kremlin last year by Yeltsin, has said that Berezovsky is at the heart of a "demented, warped, irresponsible capitalism – they don't pay their workers and they don't pay their taxes."

At the mention of Nemtsov's name, Berezovsky shows his first sign of irritation. "I pay my taxes like everybody else. I personally asked him to take up the post, but he was unfit for it. The reformers used up their abilities. They had to be discarded. Nemtsov never had any real influence and now he's got even less."

But the source of so many of Russia's troubles is the unrestrained rise of a class of men sharp enough to use the end of the Soviet Union to amass a small fortune and ruthless enough to turn it, in the swirl of unregulated privatisation, into large fortunes which they have since used to swal-

Berezovsky offers no account of how he ended up with a business and finance empire valued at £1.8bn

low up an immature political elite. Armed with wealth, they bought power which, in a country where business dealings are opaque and often dangerous, brought them more wealth. Markets are rigged, officials corrupt. In Russia, money smells worse than elsewhere. As Mikhail Khodorkovsky, a business partner of Berezovsky's, puts it: "Politics is the most lucrative field of business in Russia and always will be."

How could any society and economy develop healthily in these circumstances? Berezovsky waves away the question. "Why do people insist on describing me as if I were some dark force?" he says. "Nemtsov has deceived and misled people. The difficulties of Russia cannot be blamed on the oligarchs. Our interests are Russia's interests. If you want people to pay taxes, you must give them a government they trust. Otherwise, they don't believe they are getting anything for their money." It is not clear how he expects a government without revenue from the country's wealthiest businesses to operate at all, let alone gain the public's trust.

He is anxious about his reputation. Accused by *Forbes* magazine of involvement in the murder of the television journalist Vladimir Lisitsyn during a savage battle for control of the main ORT channel, he sued for damages, using Peter Carter-Ruck as his lawyer. The case was deemed to be outside the jurisdiction of the British courts.

Berezovsky was questioned about the murder which, like most contract killings in the Russian business underworld, has never been resolved. Suddenly, stricken with the awful self-consciousness of asking someone sitting in the armchair opposite whether he is responsible for a murder, my Russian comes out in a heavy jumble, as if I had a guilty conscience. Berezovsky's companion starts to walk up and down.

But the tycoon is still calm, his hands folded. He answers in exactly the same rapid monotone as if I had enquired after the fate of his stocks. "It was a political killing. The case was not properly investigated. They hushed it up. What does it tell you? People were trying to get hold of the company – to blame it on me to undermine my position. People involved in the Kremlin power struggles are the ones who should be investigated. But it hasn't happened."

These are uncertain times for the nation's leading businessmen. The networks which brought them to power are now in vicious competition with one another. The Yeltsin years are drawing to a close. The fight for the future has begun. But it is the future of the past. Late Communist Russia re-born: a doomed attempt to turn back the clock to central plans and controls. Berezovsky has no intention of being turned back with it. He is telling us that he has both the money and the stomach for a fight.

In his dealings with Yeltsin and Chernomyrdin, he is said to have presented them with sheets of paper on which he had doodled squares. Inside the squares, he would write the names of people he wanted appointed to government and top economic posts. The next day, *Tass* would carry news of the appointments.

When he is gone, I notice that he has left two pieces of paper behind. On the first is the checklist of topics and names. On the second he has drawn three large squares, one at the top, two underneath, with a dot inside each. There are no names inside.

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09/11/2015



What's the second biggest threat to the planet? Man introducing rampant species to new parts of the world. By Steve Connor

# Some creatures should stay at home

**T**hey are alien invaders without any rights of abode. They are more successful, more vigorous and ultimately more deadly than their native cousins. And they are now the second most important reason why the world is losing species at an unprecedented rate. The problem of alien animals and plants—introduced by humans to parts of the globe where they would never normally go—has become one of the most important causes of the crisis in biodiversity at the end of the 20th century.

One scientist has likened the biological era we are living through as the "Homogeneous". The rich biodiversity of the Earth is being homogenised by the movement and replacement of animals and plants from one area into another. As they become established, they quickly decimate the native flora and fauna. In simple Darwinian terms, it is the survival of the fittest.

Professor Morris Gosling, a mammalian ecologist at the Zoological Society of London, explained what is at stake at last week's British Association science festival in Cardiff. "The natural world is the end product of a complex and wonderful process of evolution and that has produced a rich biodiversity. What's happening is that we are replacing that biodiversity with a smaller number of invading species." The hap-hazard introduction of non-native species is now running a close second



No one knows how many American mink there are in Britain, but no one doubts that they are a threat to every small mammal here

Planet Earth Pictures

To make matters worse, the American signal crayfish (which was introduced to replace its European cousin in the 1970s, with government blessing, fish farmers in Britain were encouraged to cultivate the American crayfish, but it soon became a rampant pest. "It not only kills the native crayfish, it also destroys the freshwater environment because it eats anything else it comes into contact with. It also burrows into river banks and destroys them in the process," said David Holdich of Nottingham University.

One of the best-known examples of a species that is totally inappropriate for anywhere but its native homeland is the American mink. Nobody knows the true numbers of introduced mink in Britain but the experts believe its presence poses a genuine threat to virtually every small mammal and bird it comes across, most notably the British water vole.

David MacDonald, a specialist on the American mink at Oxford University, said: "They are such an

amazingly vigorous and competitive species. They are a triumph of adaptability, being one of the most successful mammalian carnivores." Unfortunately this does not help the British water vole, which has adapt-

ed to running away from predators that could neither swim nor fit into its narrow burrow. American mink can do both.

American mink first escaped into Britain from fur farms in the 1920s and since then have established a formidable beachhead for a complete

invasion of the countryside. Their destructive influence has, however, become far worse in recent years due to the continued loss of wild habitats. "The impact of the mink on native species may have been exacerbated by generally disadvantageous things. The habitat bordering our rivers has been eroded to a tiny little ribbon in which everything is confined: everything is hanging on this little tightrope. The mink simply travels along it and bounces off the native prey," Dr MacDonald said.

Aggressive carnivores are not the only problem facing the beleaguered scientists trying to fend off the invasion force of non-native species. Hedgehogs are perhaps the most docile animals imaginable yet they are helping to wipe out important colonies of ground-nesting seabirds living on the remote islands of the Outer Hebrides. In the 1970s, just seven were introduced by well-meaning residents as garden pets. Nearly 30 years later, they have expanded to an estimated population of 10,000.

Digger Jackson of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

said that seabird populations have declined by up to 70 per cent since the hedgehogs arrived, the spiny creatures eating the eggs. The hedgehog population, meanwhile, is aided by fewer predators (and even fewer cars) than on the mainland. They have also formed an unholy alliance with another invader, the rabbit, which conveniently digs the holes in which the hedgehogs live.

Trying to tackle the growth of an alien species frequently means introducing another species to attack them. Most of these work, according to Sean Murphy of CABI bioscience, a consultancy specialising in the biological control of pests. "The record is that there have been more than 5,000 introductions of agents against insect pests worldwide and 1,000 introductions against weed pests worldwide, and that record has been extremely good now there is an international code for the introductions of biological control agents."

This has not always been the case, however. One of the worst examples is the introduction of a predatory snail called *Euglandina* into the

*Hedgehogs are perhaps the most docile animals imaginable yet they are helping to wipe out seabirds*

## THE TRUTH ABOUT... EXTRATERRESTRIALS AND THE 'HYDROGEN BAND'

EARLIER THIS week the SETI Institute began another project in its search for extraterrestrial intelligence (from which it derives its name). Project Phoenix, so-called because it "rises from the ashes of [US] Congressional funding cuts", will run for three years and use the world's largest radio telescopes, including those at Jodrell Bank, Cheshire, to listen for signs of radio frequencies originating from nearby stars.

The project will listen in a specific frequency range – 1,000MHz to 3,000MHz, in the microwave part of the electromagnetic spectrum – for signals that might be artificially produced. The system will be able to search in steps of 1Hz.

Quite apart from the question of how they might determine whether a signal is "artificial", one might ask why those frequencies particularly? If ET wants to let us know that he, she or it is out there, why not any arbitrarily-chosen frequency?

It turns out that there's a very good reason. Within the microwave band is a particular frequency, 1,420MHz (equivalent to a wavelength of 21 centimetres). Known as the "hydrogen band", it corresponds to the energy of a photon emitted from a hydrogen atom when it undergoes the "spin-flip" transition. That happens when the atom's single electron spontaneously flips so that its spin value is the opposite of that of the single proton in the

atom's nucleus. The spin-flip transition is chosen because it is the most common transition for an atom of free hydrogen, and that is the most plentiful element in the universe. For that reason, 1,420MHz was first suggested as a channel for interstellar communication in 1959, the very next year, Frank Drake, now head of SETI, set up an experiment looking for messages on that wavelength from nearby stars.

Furthermore, there is relatively little background static from galaxies, quasars, and other cosmic noise-makers in the microwave part of the spectrum. This also helps by making faint signals easier to pick out.

As Professor Drake says: "Every radio astronomer – including ex-

traterrestrial ones – will know about this hydrogen emission. It may serve as a universal 'marker' on the radio dial. Consequently it makes sense to use this, or nearby frequencies, for interstellar 'hailing' signals."

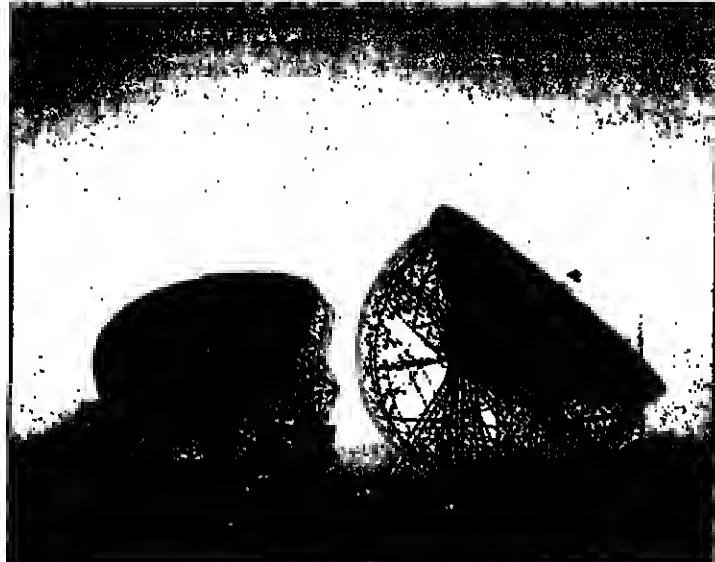
Signals originating from outer space will be checked for signs of encoding, or being limited in bandwidth, which is a sure sign that the signal is being carefully controlled. Some critics have suggested that this approach is too limited, and insisted that other frequencies – related, say, to carbon dioxide's emission spectrum – should be used instead. (Perhaps, as oxygen breathers, we should use oxygen.)

But the SETI logic does at least mean that we will find minds that

think like ours, and which know the basics, such as the composition of the universe, the composition of atoms, and how to build radio transmitters. That certainly covers a lot of physics, only some of which (the transmitters) was feasible before this century, even though humans have been walking the Earth for millions of years.

SETI and similar projects have never found any confirmed contact from the stars, but perhaps it's just because our alien counterparts are still in their equivalent of Victorian times; statistically, there are so many stars that intelligent life must be out there somewhere. Meanwhile, the search goes on.

CHARLES ARTHUR



Is anybody there? Jodrell Bank will be listening for signs of radio frequencies from nearby stars

Science Photo Library

THE INDEPENDENT

## Travel to Paris free on Eurostar

The Independent on Sunday has chartered an entire Eurostar train to take readers to Paris. To claim a free seat for you and a partner, simply collect four tokens from The Independent/The Independent on Sunday and enter. Winners will be able to spend a weekend (or a week-long) break in the French capital (the choice of return journey is yours). There are no losers: unsuccessful applicants will be entitled to discounts of up to £50 on travel to Paris or Brussels.

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**TOKEN**

THE INDEPENDENT



# Prognosis, poor. Inject cash now



Tess Jaray's spectacular brick design outside Leeds General Infirmary is a fantastic example of how successful art in public spaces can be. But now that the Arts Council's lottery funding has been capped, how much more of it will we see? By Nonie Niesewand

Jubilee Square, outside Leeds General Infirmary, is the space that separates the new Jubilee Wing by cutting-edge hospital architects Llewellyn-Davies, who have replicated the rotunda of the Gilbert Scott hospital with their own entrance. The entrance is "as welcoming as a hotel foyer", the project architect Ken Cook says optimistically. More accustomed to working around fibre optic and laser technology with the men and women in white coats than artists, the architects, Llewellyn-Davies, admit that Tess Jaray's work has a calming influence on what is potentially a stressful area. They wanted her to work from the edges of their building inwards but she started from the canvas centre and worked outwards.

Her first project off the canvas and into 3D space was the forecourt of Victoria Station, which drew her right into Victorian pattern-making. Only an artist, she believes, could have spent the time to realise this kind of research. Her early brick patterns on paper were based on the erroneous idea that bricks bonded two-to-one. When she realised that the configuration was three-to-one, it opened up new potential. Next was the oriental carpet-making at the heart of Birmingham, and then the pale-blue and buff cruciform design

outside Wakefield Cathedral. At Stickley, in Stoke-on-Trent, she reinvented the palest of pale huff bricks to anchor her designs, but then she learnt that they darkened "in our carbonated atmosphere so she found an alternative. There is nothing she doesn't know about brick, or the laying of it.

The magic - and calming - power of pattern is introduced outside Leeds Infirmary with just four shades of brick, and fewer brick shapes than the Moguls had at their disposal, although she used some 80 different types of special brick shapes made with Brian Cooper of Bstock Building products. She calls it "Pattern without vertigo". It has the endacity of true invention, the triumph of ideas over technical limitations. Brick the colour of old strawberries faintly echoes Gilbert Scott's Moorish decoration. A Gothic revivalist who designed St Pancras, Scott consulted Florence Nightingale in the planning of Leeds General Infirmary in 1868. Jaray puts a spin on his add-on ornamentation by making deft weaves from Prince of Wales check to herringbone, interwoven with paisley. When she wants to tease the bricks who work alongside her on these patterns - as intricate as Fair Isle but a lot more backbreaking - she calls it "male knitting".

Rather than just pattern-making, Jaray uses traditional English bond brickwork for the rhythm and texture it generates. Carefully detailed planters and steps in the levels are expressive of the sloping site. Exuberant zigzagging, more Samarkand than Leeds city centre, marks the moment when Jaray got lift-off from the horizontal canvas and into the vertical plane, on something as prosaic as the huge retaining walls are deep, designed to be sat upon in some areas. More than functional, they curl and scroll along changes of level, and the complex profiles of the round-edged copings set up plays of light on the moulting and chasing of the bricks. Tess Jaray's strength is that she has given these brick ramparts a sense of softness, not something you associate with brick.

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Leeds General Infirmary and Jubilee Square - Tess Jaray's canvas for the future  
Jerry Hardman-Jones

## Modernism finds a human face

A competition launched to design a housing complex in the heart of Edinburgh's Old Town has produced a minor masterpiece. By Nonie Niesewand

"MORE ALDBURGH than Edinburgh," was Janet Street Porter's verdict on Richard Murphy's mannerly Modernist scheme for housing in Edinburgh's Old Town, winner of the Burrell competition she judged. His pitched-roof scheme for 34 houses which will be built on an awkward site, currently a car park on Tron Square, is just a quarter-of-a-mile from the new Scottish parliament.

None of the 12 younger practices invited to enter the Burrell competition were able to submit ideas for the parliament in the "open" competition, since it excluded all but the big international players with mega-budget buildings on their CVs.

An exhibition, at Edinburgh's Matthew Gallery, of the submissions for housing to be built by the Burrell company pinpoints how Modernism is getting along in Scotland. Nicely, thank you, with a revival of early Modernist social conscience and more urban planning than stylistic flourish. "Human beings get lost in the architectural debate, and unless you're designing a power sta-

tion, you have to get buildings built for people. We always start with the social side," says Murphy.

Which is why this minor £1.2m housing competition in the centre interested Murphy. Nationally prominent because he wins awards, including the Stirling Prize, his best known building is the Maggie Keswick Centre at the Edinburgh's Western General Hospital. Charles Jencks, who commissioned it from him, has asked his chum Frank Gehry to build his first British project with another Maggie Keswick cancer community centre at Dundee.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about Murphy is the way he moves vernacular out of a stylistic debate and into an historical and contextual one. "I'm 43, and studied at Newcastle and Edinburgh, and my generation survived the post-modern rubbish to see through it all as fake history."

Rather than bolt-on heritage, Murphy explores the topography and history of housing in Edinburgh on site at Tron Square.

For centuries, Edinburgh has been a model for mixed housing, with every social mix stacked in the same tenement from the basement to the top, where views across the city were the best. Murphy responded with four whirly James Bond-style flats in dramatic two-storey spaces with spectacular views and 20 spacious, well-lit, uncomplicated apartments below. The competition brief asked for 30 units on site, but he concluded that overloading would lead to a bulky building, so he adventurously submitted his ideas to the property developer, the Burrell Group, which ran the competition with just 24 units.

He observed the lines of a "close", the long thin alleyways which run perpendicular to the city's High Street, to divide his housing into two rectangular blocks left free-standing rather than linked with glass atriums or walkways like some of the other submissions. This produced two public spaces, a private garden and public space for a terrace and café.

Less stylistic in its intent, his scheme involves a sympathetic un-

derstanding of history overlaid with a confidence in the future.

Piers Gough, that seasoned architect of good housing which people like to live in, was also a judge of the Burrell competition. His summing up is a checklist for wannabe housing designers: think urban space, don't have too many bright ideas on a small site; keep it simple and think through all the details and don't know. He is unequivocal: "Even if you loathe Post Modernism, you've got to admit that it brought back other ways of dealing with a floating site rather than an old Modernist building on a strong horizontal plinth."

Although all the competition's entries were of a high standard, it was the simplicity of Murphy's ideas which won. "It's not a wild ideas competition," says Gough. "We are looking to build here and sensibility really attracted the judges. Murphy's scheme wasn't pretentious, nor did he throw the kitchen sink at it. I think his work is more complex than at first observed, with lots of layers. He starts with a simple, direct

idea and builds up its interest."

Architecturally, Alan Murray's submission was the most exciting. He contrasted two halves of the building, so that the scheme was very attractive from the nearby High Street. But the lack of any external space counted against him in a close-run finish.

Murray is convinced that this Tron Square submission was one of the best things his practice has done. "In the spirit of good Modernist housing," the fact that his £50m office, retail and cinema complex at Greenside, bang in the middle of a World Heritage Site at Edinburgh's Calton Hill, has just been given planning permission did not make him too grand to enter the Burrell competition.

"The size of a project doesn't influence me," he says. "There is an architectural challenge there, right in the heart of the city, with a committed developer. Besides, it's the most dynamic city and I wanted the dynamics of the city to eventually find its way into every nook and cranny."



Close run thing: Richard Murphy's winning design



# now Make a show of yourself

One minute you're languishing in your studio, the next you're all over the pages of *Wallpaper\** magazine.

100% Design's new bursary can help young designers realise their dreams. By Hugh St Clair

IN FOUR years the contemporary furniture show 100% Design has come a long way. The first show brought together 180 avant-garde designer-makers who had begged and borrowed money for a chance to be catapulted from their dusty workshops into a glossy marquee in Chelsea and beyond by influential shops, interior designers, architects and multinational manufacturers. For the most part, although enthusiasm was high, sales were not. Many important and established manufacturers didn't even visit.

The feeling about the show today is rather different. It is held at Earls Court, and the number of stands and visitors has doubled. Buying is up too. Every home furnishings company is desperate to be associated with 100% Design – according to Ian Rudge, its chief organiser, only half who apply get accepted.

Rudge and his team were worried that 100% Design would lose sight of its original aim – to exhibit the best of modern British design – and become dominated by multinational companies who manufacture reproduction furniture in the Far East.

His response has been to launch a bursary scheme to pay half the cost of an exhibition space. The bursary is open to British-based new talents who have never shown at a trade fair before. "Our advisory panel, which comprises a Crafts Council representative, an architect, the editor of *Blueprint* and a Heals buyer, have selected 11 designer-makers, whose work is capable of being produced in large numbers," explains Rudge.

Janet Stoyel produces metal textiles using photo-laser and ultrasound technology to alter the texture of copper, stainless steel and phosphor bronze and change their metal hues into brilliant colours. For her, the bursary is a recognition of 30 years of struggle and determination. After leaving school at 16 with no

qualifications, she went to work full-time, studying textiles at night school while her husband babysat. Later she completed a City and Guilds fashion course, followed by art school, then a course in textile construction in Birmingham.

Stoyel won a trip to Japan's fabric factories in a knitting competition and became fascinated by their technology. Back home, at a car show, she learnt about laser machines and their manufacturers. One, which built lasers for firing missiles on Challenger tanks, was willing "to let a mad woman stick fabrics under a laser to see what the effect would be". She produced her first collection of polyester silk-mix laser-altered scarves. They were bought by Paul Smith and Paloma Picasso.

For another effect she used an ultrasound machine "like the one you scan babies with" to bombard leather with sound, creating amazing patterns; the results have been sold to Gucci and Donna Karan. At 100% Design Stoyel will show metal wall-cladding given a dose of lasers and ultrasound, along with cushions and curtains made from the finest metals.

By contrast, Bodo Sperlein, who is German-born and England-based, is breathing new life into bone china at the Thomas Goode factory in Stoke-on-Trent. "When I started doing ceramics at art school, people would say to me that all British porcelain was twee or hippie. I wanted to get away from that and make something clean, modern and elegant. Bone china is much nicer to use than earthenware."

Sperlein must have been doing something right, because he was voted one of eight best newcomers by *Wallpaper\** magazine last year. He has designed a range of bowls and vases for the fashion store Browns Homeware Collection, and is launching a new ceramic light shade at the show. "The bone china

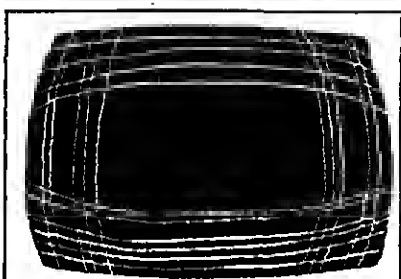
is backed with a fine rubber resin but is still translucent and very heat-resistant," he says. "The mix of bone china and rubber resin has amazing potential. You will be able to mould it and make cups in one piece. At present the handle is stuck on later."

Sharon Elphick has a mission "to take something many people consider ugly and make them look at it in a different way". In her case it was the tower blocks of London, Paris, Sao Paulo, New York and Berlin. She photographed them, then screen-printed a collage of the prints on to canvas. Up to now they have been huge wall hangings, but at 100% Design she is producing them as rolls of wallpaper. Already Paul Smith and Jigsaw in Bond Street have decorated their premises with her work.

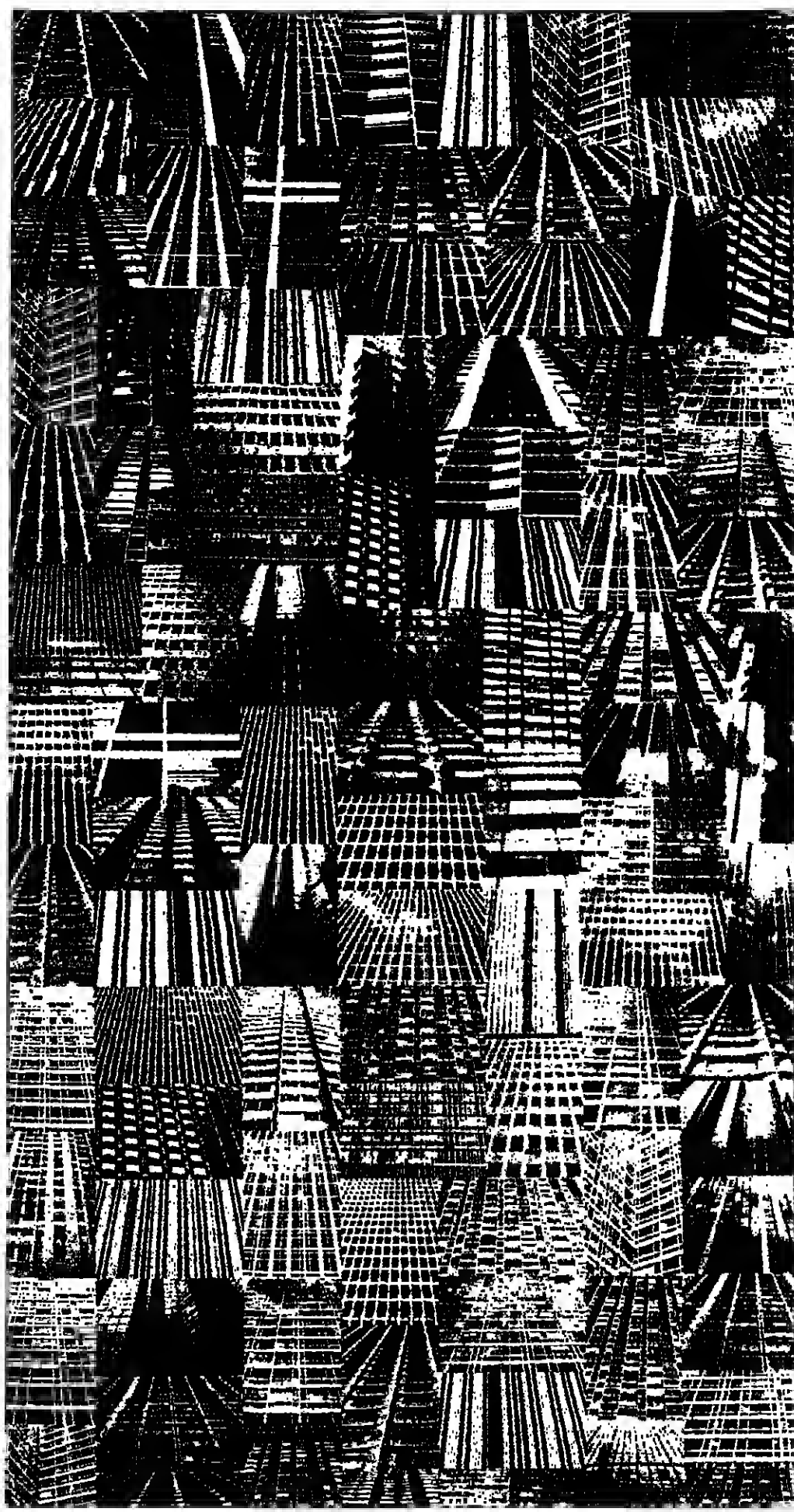
Michael Sodeau used to be part of Inflate, the acclaimed group whose blow-up chairs, tables, picture frames and eggcups were launched at the first 100% Design. He is now designing on his own, so is eligible for a bursary. He uses luxurious, natural materials: his steel-based side tables have tops veneered in Macassar ebony; a hand-woven rug reflects the colours of wood; lampshades are made from woven cane and dressing table accessories are in white ceramic and rosewood.

Sodeau designed the whole range. "Everything is compatible, so once I had an idea for one piece the others just followed on." Although he admits to watching lots of Sixties science fiction and James Bond films, he denies that they influence his ideas. "I design with my hands, not with my eyes," he says. "Everything in my collection is very sculptural. To me, if it feels good, it looks good."

100% Design is open to the public on Sunday 27 September, 10am-6pm at Earls Court Two, London SW5 (0171-381 2993 for details). Tickets cost £8 in advance, £12 on the door.



Illustrations clockwise from right: inner-city designs by Sharon Elphick who has printed images of towerblocks in Brazil, Germany and Britain on to wallpaper; Bodo Sperlein's modern take on bone china designed for Browns' home collection; luxurious natural materials inspired the geometric 'Charlie' rug by Michael Sodeau; a bolt of metal textiles created by using photo-laser and ultrasound technology by Janet Stoyel



## He's a dedicated follower of furniture

Like the shirt? This man is a fashion phenomenon, and he attributes his success to a pair of chair designers. By Andrew Zneimer



Gucci, the Italian fashion house whose name remains synonymous with sexy chic, is currently sponsoring a major exhibition of two of this century's most influential designers, Charles and Ray Eames. It is the first time Gucci has been involved as a patron of the arts in the UK.

At the private view on Monday, the celebrities and attendant paparazzi were out in force. Tom Ford, Gucci's much-vaunted creative director, was in London to promote the event.

"You know," explains the 36-year-old American, "there is a pair of Gucci loafers in the Museum of Modern Art in New York from the 1960s. Our heritage is based on the notion of modern Italian design and so, to sponsor an exhibition of mid-

century modernists, such as the Eames, makes perfect sense."

The Eames's met at the Academy of Art, Detroit, in 1940 and were married a year later. In their management of interior space and design of furniture and architectural structures they captured many of the defining moments in America's immediate pre- and post-war evolution. Their work became a reflection of the economic prosperity and optimism America enjoyed throughout the 1950s and 1960s. As ordinary Americans acquired a car for the first time, the Eames's explored the use of new materials to create low-cost, high-quality furniture for the mass market.

"The Eames truly believed the world could be a better place," continues Ford. "I think this opportunity to appreciate their work is really timely. Look at what's happening with advances in AIDS and cancer drugs. You can feel the energy and self-belief of youth on the streets here in London. This is much of what the Eames were about."

Ford himself started out as a student of architecture, although he abandoned it quickly for being "too serious", and admits freely that his work at Gucci is influenced by the world of art and design. He refers enthusiastically to the Californian architect Neutra (he recently bought a Neutra house), to his European counterpart Mies van der Rohe and, of course, to the Eames's.

Ford believes the intimate relationship between fashion, design and culture is both necessary and unavoidable. "I have never literally looked at an Eames chair and said, 'how can I turn that into a pair of pants?'" he states. "Nevertheless, fashion for me has to have something to do with what is happening in the world. For it to be 'mass' it has also to refer to populist culture."

"In fashion terms, you have to know what came before you to have a chance of knowing what the next thing will be. Fashion is business and commerce, not art. You have to take what is in the air and turn it into something people want to buy."

Since joining the company in 1995, Ford has transformed Gucci from a failing business producing suitcases with a famous label into the \$1 billion fashion emporium it is today. One assumes that he is quite adept at anticipating market trends and giving people what they want.

Ford, rather like Charles and Ray Eames before him, sees himself as a "modernist". He cares about practicality and functionalism. "I wonder, if they were alive today, if the Eames's would not be off on some tangent we haven't thought of. Maybe they would be into electronics and software. You know, in the near future, rather than buy a new painting, perhaps you'll purchase a software programme that will re-

decorate your house, boom, like that. Software developments will change design forever."

Ford has just signed a new five-year contract at Gucci and is on a mission to revamp the Gucci glob-

al network of stores – which boast their own range of home furnishings – and bring them all up to his meticulous standards at a staggering cost of some \$80m.

It would be interesting to know what the Eames's would make of their posthumous association with Gucci but one suspects they would share many of Ford's artistic sensibilities. After all, before attending the opening on their behalf, Eames Demetrios, their grandson, was rushed to the nearest store and bedecked in Gucci clothes after an airline suspiciously lost his luggage.

*'The Work of Charles and Ray Eames' is at the Design Museum, Shed Thames, London SE1 (0171 378 6053) until 4 January, daily 11.30-6.*

### THE MILLENNIUM COLLECTION

NO 11: THE REMARKABLE RECYCLED PENCIL

SOMEONE ONCE told me that an obsession with stationery and office materials was a sign of incipient madness. Nonetheless, there are fewer greater pleasures to be had than in contemplating such humble and yet invaluable things as drawings pins, paperclips, and pencils. They are all little treasures, but often as not lost treasures. The number of pencils I lose every month could probably, like the pieces of the True Cross, build a Spanish galleon.

How sensible, then, of somebody to think up the recycled pencil, to save our friends the forests from futile slaughter. The recycled pencil, its wood made from recycled Styrofoam vending cups, 30 per cent of its lead from recycled computer cases and costing half the price of a conventional pencil, is, from an economic, environmental and moral point of view, clearly a Very Good idea. I spend most of every working

day holding pencils, and tend to feel rather fetishistic about them. So while the recycled pencil may be a Very Good Idea, is it a good pencil? I suppose it depends on what you want to do with it. It's not much good for chewing for a start: the

compacted vending-cup stuff fails to give with the same satisfying crunch as a wooden pencil, and chewing pencils is an essential part of the cartoonist's creative process. Likewise, it's heavier than ordinary pencils, annoyingly so when

cradled between thumb and middle finger during the long hours spent, essentially and creatively, staring out of the window. It does sharpen quite nicely, which is important.

Sharpening pencils is a deeply sensuous experience, and the compacted Styrofoam curls out over the sharpener's blade in an unbroken helix. However, the lead will not sharpen to a point, and all those plastic computer cases make it splinter easily and feel irritatingly waxy when you pass it over paper. Not a very good pencil for drawing with, then, but perfectly adequate for, say, cleaning out your ears or doing sums on the back of an envelope to get for the price of one Millennium Dome. I make it 8,666,666,000 or so, which would make for an impressive fleet of galleons.

MARTIN ROWSON

### INDEPENDENT COMPETITION



THE WINNER of the 1998 Jerwood Prize for Applied Arts: Glass was Tessa Clegg whose "resonant, spiritual and sexy" glass (see above, *Red Ring*) has appeared in museums and collections throughout the world. London-based Clegg, 42, received her £15,000 prize from Sir Jocelyn Stevens at the Crafts Council this week.

Independent readers naturally pursued a

different line. They nominated jointly Keiko Mukaide and Anna Dickinson, whose work was judged to be "expressive", "classically simple" and "luminous". Congratulations to Bernard Banks from Sherborne, Dorset, who is the winner of the Independent Competition, and to the two runners-up, N. Fletcher from Malton, North Yorkshire, and C. Powis from Kent.



# Fired in the kiln of fatherhood

Pottery was not Pablo Picasso's first art form. But, as his son points out, the great man made over 3,500 ceramic works, a selection of which are on show in London. By Rachel Barnes

I think what I most admired about my father was his extraordinary courage," Claude Picasso told me. "He had such energy to pursue whatever he wanted, and he really didn't care what others thought. It was what made him great. 'I do not seek, I find,' he insisted, and he wanted his heart to be 'alive and dangerous'. What confidence he had!" I met Claude Picasso in London this week, surrounded by his father's work, much of which he had watched being made in Vallauris in the Fifties. Claude is here with his sister Paloma, the other child of Picasso's marriage to Françoise Gilot, to open the first major show of the artist's work in clay at the Royal Academy.

Claude, at 51, looks extraordinarily like Picasso. He has the same huge mesmeric dark eyes, strong features and charismatic smile. He told me that he felt that his character was like his father's in certain respects, but wouldn't specify. From his conversation, it is clear he inherits both parents' heightened sensitivity to the visual world. He was evidently enormously proud of the exhibition, again reminiscent of Picasso, who was never one to underestimate his considerable gifts.

"I really wish he could have seen all this," Claude tells me in faultless English with a strong French accent. "I am so pleased with the way the show looks under the natural light. I think people will be really amazed at the sheer variety and inventiveness of the work, and at the way my father's personality comes through so clearly. There is such wit and humour here, which was my father at his most charismatic."

This exhibition focuses on the artist's work in clay, made in the South of France in the last 30 years of his life. "Up until now, this part of Picasso's work has not been considered on a par with his achievements as a sculptor and painter," says Claude. "But I have always believed this part of his artistic life to be just as important. I know that he did. He made 3,500



Picasso's style shines through his works at the RA

pieces after all" Claude has selected 200 for the London show, two thirds of which have never been exhibited before.

Picasso began working in the ceramic medium after visiting the Madorra pottery in Vallauris in 1946. The rich soil of this region of France had supported a ceramics industry since Roman times. Picasso, always fascinated with the prospect of revitalising old traditions, was especially inspired by the Mediterranean past.

"I think it was a really special time for him," says Claude. "He was at last celebrating the end of the terrible war, and in a sense it was a rebirth of life. In his sixties, he had married a beautiful, young, intelligent woman - my mother - and now they had a new son. I think he loved living in that part of the world with the fantastic light, the only original real light of art. His sense of pleasure, and fun, and celebration comes out in the work he made at this time."

In Vallauris as a child, Claude became familiar with the way his father worked. "Although my parents were not always aware of it, I was often there watching," he says. "I remember so well my father's complete concentration when he went to the studio. Everything he did, every movement he made, he did with complete concentration. Then, after he had finished work he would go to the beach, or whatever, and then he would enjoy play and forget about his work."

"I don't think that he experienced doubts about his work the way many artists do. People

wondered why he was bothering with such a minor art form as pottery, but this did not worry him in the least. It was what he had decided to do."

Claude believes his father found it stimulating to work in close collaboration with Jules Agar, who was the potter. Throughout his mercurial career, despite his independence, Picasso had found inspiration working closely with other artists he respected. It had been the same when he and Braque had invented Cubism together.

"I used to love watching as Jules would throw a small vase and my father would instantly grab it and quickly, without hesitation, turn it into something, a pigeon, perhaps, or a dove or an owl. His hands worked so fast and knowingly. It was exciting for him to experiment with mixing the bright shiny colours, which were so wonderful for a child to see. I think working with the primal elements of fire and earth appealed greatly to my father, because of the almost magical results."

Many of Picasso's biographers have delighted in telling the story of how Picasso raided Claude's toy box when he was four, and took the parts of a broken toy to make his famous Baboon sculpture in 1961. He had, by this time, been engaged for several years in making sculptures from things he found on the rubbish tip.

"The story about my father making the baboon sculpture is quite true," says Claude. "But no-one has ever mentioned how furious I was with him! The toy

had not broken accidentally. I had deliberately dismantled it and I still wanted the pieces. I don't think my father realised this - but I soon told him!"

"My mother tells me that I was a very busy, curious child, and that I quite often challenged my father when I was little, which she thought was rather good for him!"

Photographs of Picasso playing with Claude in the sea and on the beach confirm the father's delight and fascination with his son. One of Claude's memories is watching transfixed as his father transformed one object into something else. "One day he saw an old broken basket when he was out with me and my mother," Claude recalls. "Look!" he said. "This is perfect for my goat."

"What are you talking about?" said my mother. This basket became the stomach of his famous goat sculpture.

Claude and his sister Paloma were only aged six and four when Françoise Gilot made the decision to leave Picasso. "No body leaves a man like me," he told her, but she did.

Claude's memories of his father are obviously very bound up with his young life, but his recollections appear to be clear and positive. "I was incredibly lucky to be born to such parents," he says. "I have often talked to my mother about my father. She is very perceptive."

While he was involved with setting up his current exhibition Claude was reminded of a rare bout of nerves his father experienced when an exhibition of his work was set up in the Louvre in 1946, before Claude was born.

"He was so competitive - he was on tenterhooks to see how his work would stand up by the great Old Masters," says Claude. "But, gradually, he relaxed. 'It's all the same thing!' he kept saying. I am sure he would have felt a little nervous seeing this work in clay on show for the first time. But, I am equally sure, he would have been delighted with it!"

*Picasso, Painter and Sculptor in Clay, is at the Royal Academy of Arts until 27 December*



Claude Picasso: 'Working with the primal elements of fire and earth appealed greatly to my father'

## The power to heal

### THEATRE

OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD  
YOUNG VIC  
LONDON

AS PREDICAMENTS go, it is dramatic. It is close to opening night and it is entirely possible that the leading actress is not going to be around. Not because she has got a better offer, but because she is going to be hanged.

There is nothing worse than the sound of theatre talking to itself but there is nothing self-congratulatory about Timberlake Wertenbaker's magnificent *Our Country's Good*, revived by Out of Joint. It is a thrilling theatrical juxtaposition of life and death, a cross between *Crime and Punishment* and all those backstage plays which cry "Let's put the show on right here!" You want to understand why theatre is still important? Look no further.

Wertenbaker's characters are an ill-begotten group of convicts deported to Australia in 1789 where their lives are harshly ruled by officers with little regard for anything but the letter of the law. Yet she refuses to resort to cardboard characterisations. Everyone is subject to the command of a governor (Jonathan Cullen) who looks upon his hopeless "criminals" with a rare degree of humanity. His belief in redemption through the healing processes of art leads him to sanction the convicts acting in a production of Farquhar's comedy, *The Recruiting Officer*.

There is plenty of good dialogue, but more than any other of her plays this shows Wertenbaker's understanding that it is structure and metaphor which create real drama. The placing of actors and scenes makes you understand the power of her arguments. That is displayed with startling clarity in the doubling-up of roles by the cast who play both officers and convicts.

The most brutal of the officers (Declan Conlon) insists on watching rehearsals. Disgusted that the fledgling actors wish for privacy and have a personal modesty, he tries to degrade them.

This is followed by the same actor playing the gibbering convict whose job it is to prepare his fellow prisoners for the gallows as he measures up the play-within-a-play's fearsomely sullen leading actress (Sally Rogers). Technically, we are watching a vividly theatrical metaphor. Not that we care: we are too busy being moved by the juxtaposition of what we see and hear and thus feel.

Max Stafford-Clark, who first directed the play in 1988, is back and again proves that there are no small parts in his productions. The detail and compassion in the tiniest moments takes your breath away. In the beautifully orchestrated final scene, Sarah Walton quietly releases her character's soul with the words, "I love this". She is not alone.

To October 24 (0171-928 6363)

DAVID BENEDICT

## Suffer all the pretty children

When do images abuse a child? A debate at the ICA aims to find an answer. By Patricia Holland



JonBenet Ramsey caught in adult pose

THE THING about taboos is not that they warn us off a topic, but that they attract us to it. They signal with bright, flashing lights that here is something we will all be fascinated by, and then - as in the "special" room in the controversial *Sensations* exhibition - they hide it to tantalise us. Instead of averting our eyes, we rush to see, but our looking is tempered by fear.

So it is with pictures of children, the cultural obsession of the Nineties. Isn't there something pleasurable about the shock we experience when we see those pictures of JonBenet

Ramsey, a child enacting adulthood in lipstick and feathers? The fact that she was later murdered seems like a terrible judgement on those who displayed her in this way, but also on those of us who experience the power of the pictures, as well as on the child herself.

In the context of public debates around child abuse, paedophilia, violent and murderous children, and the fragile corruptibility of childhood, we approach contemporary images of children with unprecedented nervousness. There has been censorship, rushed legislation

and many a cry of outrage. All of this is the territory explored by *Spoilt Children*, this weekend's event at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts.

"Spoiling" children is a dreadful thing to do, and there are all sorts of contradictory ways of doing it, from too much pampering to the most callous forms of abuse. Yet the worst taboo is still the involvement of children in sexual activity.

How can we reconcile the understanding that children are sexual beings - after all, Freud made this clear 100 years ago - with the recognition

that children's involvement in adult sexual activity is deeply abusive? Much debate centres on the cultural efforts to resolve this paradox.

One solution has been to scrutinise and control the images themselves. James Reilly, who will be part of the ICA discussion, was one of those artists whose work was put in a separate room in the *Sensations* exhibition, with a warning to parents posted at the entrance. In an even stranger example, the publishers of a respectable academic journal, *Continuum*, hesitated to put on its cover a picture taken by an Australian photography student. The student, who had photographed her own son, had been arrested and remained on remand for more than two years.

As Professor John Hartley from Cardiff University explains, she had been "captured" by the "alarmingly wide" new censorship law in Western Australia. This only requires a person who "looks like" a child under 16 years of age to be photographed, "in a manner that is likely to cause offence to a reasonable adult", to be declared pornographic.

The boy in the picture is naked, sitting gazing at the camera, but his crotch is covered by his hand. This is a reversal of the notorious Robert Mapplethorpe photograph of "Rosie", taken in 1976, in which the child is fully dressed but inadvertently reveals her private parts, not only to a particularly

sensual photographer, but to following generations who continue to gaze at his work.

The Australian student's picture made it on to the cover of the journal, but the Hayward Gallery left Rosie out of its 1996 Mapplethorpe show.

Images of children have changed over the years, and the growth of photography and commercial imagery, from the end of the 19th century, led to an explosion of pictures for popular consumption. Postcards from the Truly Scrumptious model agency, whose director Sharon Oshea will also be at the ICA, are the inheritors of a long tradition.

These days, pictures are made in a context which is even more strongly market driven, and children are playing a new role as consumers. A growing awareness of children's rights is another factor which jostles for attention. It is not easy to decide whether we are seeing a new frankness or new forms of exploitation. But children grow up. Do they have rights over "their" pictures?

Alice Liddle continued to be proud of Lewis Carroll's seductive *Alice in Wonderland* images of her as a pre-pubescent child. Mapplethorpe's Rosie criticised the Hayward's decision to remove her picture from the walls.

The daughters of Sally Mann, who collaborated in their mother's controversial photographs, have said how pleased they were to find they were living with a genius. But

such positive reactions cannot be taken for granted. In such a climate, there can be no easy answers.

*'Spoilt Children' is at the ICA, The Mall, London SW1 (0171-930 3647). Tomorrow and Sunday. Patricia Holland is the author of 'What Is A Child: Popular Images Of Childhood' published by Virago*

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# MUSIC

Where the four-piece pop group goes to die, there lurks The Beta Band. By Ben Thompson



## Things can only get Beta

**Y**ou know that magical feeling when the music sounds so strange it feels like a secret, and you look on stage to the people who are making it and then realise that hundreds of people are getting the secret at the exact same time? That's what the atmosphere tends to be like when The Beta Band play live.

Three Scotsmen and a lone Englishman - though due to their tendency to swap instruments in mid-song, one might easily suppose them to be an octet - their strange, surging, pagan, deceptively simple music applies a desperately needed shot of adrenaline to the prone form of the four-piece pop group. Not just slotting into other people's bills but stubbornly filling whole evenings with their own warped and wonderful hybrid of great music, terrible poetry, and alarming videos of strange rituals on Scottish hillsides, The Beta Band are the most exciting new British band to emerge in the last year and a half by a country mile.

Part-art-school rumba, part duh reverie, part pastoral idyll, The Beta Band sound resists all attempts at classification. "We all come from the countryside initially," explains their turntable wizard, John MacLean, on the telephone from the tour hotel in Liverpool. "And musically, we like to think that we inhabit our own village." The three four-track EPs the band have released over the past year and a bit - *Champion Versions*, *The Patty Patty Sound* and *Los Amigos Del Beta Band* (now collected together on a single disc

which the band insist is "not really an album" to stop mad people paying £40 for them) - mark out that village as a very desirable place to live. But it's on stage that the band are at their most irresistible.

"When we first started playing gigs," MacLean continues, "the idea was to make it like a 1989 house club, but everyone was just standing and staring and not dancing. They've started to move around a bit now." Faced with a stage covered in ferns, a band wearing thrift-shop karate suits backed up by a fastforward video odyssey through a selection of record sleeves so eclectic as to be almost hallucinatory ("The scary part is," MacLean continues, "that was only two of our record collections"), audiences really have no other choice.

But while their forerunners in what might casually be termed British pop's nouveau psychedelic strain - like Spiritualized and Primal Scream - seem to be shuffling the cards of their musical heritage, The Beta Band are a whole new deck. If rock history is a hotel, they have checked out and gone for a walk along the cliffs in bare feet. But don't tell them face to face that's what you think they're doing. In fact, don't try to tell them anything, or they will look at you with the wounded expression of a small child who thinks you're about to take away its biscuit.

Before The Beta Band started to make it big, the secret NUJ list of the world's most obnoxious interviewees contained four names: Jazzy B, Chris Penn, Ricki Lake and Will Oldham of the Palace Brothers. Trying to talk to our heroes in drummer

Robin's attic flat - located conveniently near to Highgate's suicide bridge, for those journalists who may want to end it all on the way home - it's as if the four resolute non-communicators listed above have decided to form a group. There's nothing intrinsically unfriendly about The Beta Band, but the inclusiveness and warmth of their music is in inverse proportion to their desire to talk about it.

*'If we're described with reference to a genre 30 years old, we've failed to make new music: I don't even know what psychedelic means'*

In a perhaps understandable reaction to the discredited Oasis/Embrace school of "We're the best band in the world" self-promotional overkill, The Beta Band regard name, rank and serial number as frankness beyond the call of duty. They once refused to do an interview with *The Face* on the grounds that they "weren't really a band", but getting a foot in the door is only the beginning.

Beta Band techniques for frustrating friendly attempts at interrogation begin with standard Beatles-inspired obfuscation. Asked to say their names on tape for voice identification purposes, they start off

by pretending to be the Beach Boys ("Brian, Dennis, Carl, Mike"), and then run the gamut of names which aren't actually their names until the joke is lying in the gutter for mercy.

They move on through vague disdain, a valiant attempt to start a discussion about the problems caused by noisy oystercatchers to coastal birdsong recordists, ends in total banalisation to downright hostility if the name of another group is mentioned.

Do they think you have to be secretive about something in order for it to be powerful? "No," says Gerry Rafferty-influenced vocalist, Steve Mason. "I just think people waste too much time talking about music that happened 30 years ago." Other hands would be very happy to be identified as coming from, say, a psychedelic tradition. "But if we're being described with reference to a genre that's 30 years old, we have failed in our quest to make brand new music," Mason insists dourly. "I don't even know what psychedelic means."

It comes from the Greek *delios*, meaning to make apparent, and *psyche*, meaning well, the psyche. It was originally used with reference to drugs that were supposed to have this effect, and then to music that was supposed to complement, intensify or echo such experiences.

"But surely all music is about coming to a deeper understanding of oneself?" says Mason.

He might have a point there. "The reason we don't say very much," interjects bassist Richard Greentree, in the grip of a momentary mercenary impulse, "is that, if we had to think about what our influences are, or why we're doing what

we're doing, it would take all the fun out of it."

That seems fair enough. So is there anything The Beta Band wouldn't find it painful to discuss? Greentree pauses. "Talking about what we actually do - what instruments we used and how different making the third EP was to making the first - that would be acceptable."

OK then, how was making the third EP different to making the first? Richard (excitedly, as if somehow vindicated): "The first EP which I didn't play on, was basically just translating demos into the studio. *Patty Patty Sound* was quite live, and recorded as much as possible in one take, all playing at the same time. The third EP was done close-miked, with fewer instruments and more attention paid to getting individual sounds exactly right, and then overlaying them all together."

But these are the kind of mundane details from which the music of The Beta Band seems so capable of transporting us. The only things The Beta Band are willing to tell us should be exactly the sort of things we really don't need to know. And that's the exact opposite of the way their music works. "It's about waking up in the morning and reaching for a guitar," they told *Melody Maker*, in a rare moment of *glasnost*. "Or a glockenspiel, or a gong."

*The Three EPs (Regal) is out 28 September. The Beta Band's rescheduled tour dates begin on 23 September, at Aberdeen Lemon Tree, and end on 30 September, at Camden Electric Ballroom. Their first album will be out next year.*

## Novel acts carry off the prizes

The Technics-Mercury Awards were an open book - but what did it all mean? By John O'Reilly

**I**N CASE we were embarrassed about liking pop music just for itself, Simon Frith, Professor of English at Strathclyde and chairman of the judging panel for the Technics-Mercury Awards, had offered some reassuring words. When the shortlist was announced, he declared that the pop album was, in fact, like a novel. As the narrative unfolded in the Shepherd's Bush Empire, the analogy occasionally made sense.

First up on stage was Pulp, fronted by Jarvis Cocker, whose decent, erratic, dislocated body movements - all twitches and spasms - read like James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. Cocker convulsed his way through two songs, "Party Hard" and "A Little Soul". Many of the shortlisted bands were on tour when the awards took place, and so Robbie Williams appeared on videotape. Williams's life is a trashy airport novel of scarcely credible plot development in which the boy makes good, makes bad, and then makes good again. So now he is in Sri Lanka with UNICEF.

Though sober as a reformed Ozzy Osbourne and packed with industry and press quaffing unlimited Chablis and scoffing quail's eggs, the evening began to metamorphose into a Jilly Cooper novel as written by Kafka. Gomez appeared on stage and, if you had not seen them before, you would have mistaken them for young, well-mannered A-level students who had lost their way on a visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum.

4-Hero performed their jazzy, drum 'n' bass soul, then thanked Jock and JR Ewing. Catatonia took the stage to receive their memento for being shortlisted: they are not like a novel at all, more a quality soap. Cerys is a Welsh barmaid with an active, imaginative fantasy life and whose love for jewellery is only matched by Bet Lynch. Which, of course, is a major reason why we love her.

After the Asian Dub Foundation performed

their punky drum 'n' bass, feta and sun-dried tomatoes while waiting for the panel's decision.

I asked one middle-aged industry insider, whose liver appeared to be swimming in Chablis, who he thought would win and found myself in a Martin Amis story. "It's all marketing, really," he said. "The Verve are a class act, but what's the point? And who the hell are half these bands anyway? They should give it to someone who can appeal to the 25-40 year olds who actually buy



Gomez: easily mistaken for well-mannered A-level students

albums. I'm going to see Depeche Mode on tour and they'd be a good choice next year."

He did have a point, though. Matters of taste aside, does the award really go to the best album? Or is it the most innovative? Or the best debut album? I retired to the bar and, for the first time, genuinely wondered on what basis the panel would choose. So I casually asked the bar-girl who might win. "Oh, I know whose going to win," she instantly replied. "This morning we knew who were the last hand on." Of course, the encore. It all made sense. This is a novel. It's Mario Puzo's *The Godfather*. It's like the fix in the 1919 World Series, but this time The Verve would throw the match and the 33/1 outsider, the folkie Eliza Carthy, would snatch the prize.

But as we know, Gomez won with *Bring It On* and there was no encore. The novel? Jerzy Kosinski's *Being There*.

## THE CHARTS

### TOP 10 UK POP ALBUMS

1	Talk on Corners	The Corrs
2	Savage Garden	Savage Garden
3	Where We Belong	Boyzone
4	Live: One Night Only	Bee Gees
5	The Best of - Hatful of Rain	Del Amitri
6	Shx	Mansun
7	Life Thru a Lens	Robbie Williams
8	Blue	Simply Red
9	Life Goes On	Sash!
10	Tubular Bells III	Mike Oldfield

### TOP 10 UK POP SINGLES

1	Millennium...	Robbie Williams
2	Sex on the Beach	T-Spoon
3	No Matter What	Boyzone
4	Finally Found	Honeyz
5	Crush	Jennifer Paige
6	One for Sorrow	Steps
7	Bootie Call	All Saints
8	Everybody Get Up	Five
9	Music Sounds Better	Stardust
10	To the Moon and Back	Savage Garden

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Includes the singles: THIS IS HARDWARE, A LITTLE SOUL, HELP THE AGED and PATTY PATTY.

The record is available in 7 tracks recorded at Oxfordshire in 1997.

PULP LIVE! 1998 - 1999 - 2000 - 2001 - 2002 - 2003 - 2004 - 2005 - 2006 - 2007 - 2008 - 2009 - 2010 - 2011 - 2012 - 2013 - 2014 - 2015 - 2016 - 2017 - 2018 - 2019 - 2020 - 2021 - 2022 - 2023 - 2024 - 2025 - 2026 - 2027 - 2028 - 2029 - 2030 - 2031 - 2032 - 2033 - 2034 - 2035 - 2036 - 2037 - 2038 - 2039 - 2040 - 2041 - 2042 - 2043 - 2044 - 2045 - 2046 - 2047 - 2048 - 2049 - 2050 - 2051 - 2052 - 2053 - 2054 - 2055 - 2056 - 2057 - 2058 - 2059 - 2060 - 2061 - 2062 - 2063 - 2064 - 2065 - 2066 - 2067 - 2068 - 2069 - 2070 - 2071 - 2072 - 2073 - 2074 - 2075 - 2076 - 2077 - 2078 - 2079 - 2080 - 2081 - 2082 - 2083 - 2084 - 2085 - 2086 - 2087 - 2088 - 2089 - 2090 - 2091 - 2092 - 2093 - 2094 - 2095 - 2096 - 2097 - 2098 - 2099 - 2100 - 2101 - 2102 - 2103 - 2104 - 2105 - 2106 - 2107 - 2108 - 2109 - 2110 - 2111 - 2112 - 2113 - 2114 - 2115 - 2116 - 2117 - 2118 - 2119 - 2120 - 2121 - 2122 - 2123 - 2124 - 2125 - 2126 - 2127 - 2128 - 2129 - 2130 - 2131 - 2132 - 2133 - 2134 - 2135 - 2136 - 2137 - 2138 - 2139 - 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# It's all over, Barbie

Aqua flew a hundred journalists to Copenhagen so they could experience them live. Why? Because they know the game is up. By Fiona Sturges

"ASK THEM if they take drugs," whispered the hack next to me as an imperious record company executive ordered us to "Stop talking. Let's have one question at a time." But just as we began to muster the confidence to ask a suitably probing question, the tacky Euro-popsters Aqua were hastily awarded a prize – we never discovered what for – and swiftly ushered out of the room.

The question "what for?" was on all our lips for the duration of this most extravagant press junket. When a band hauls 100 British journalists overseas, you can usually guarantee that they have got something big to promote. But according to Aqua's publicists, we were invited to Copenhagen simply because the band wanted to "give something back to those who had supported them" and enable us to "experience" Aqua live.

You can't have missed Aqua's rise to superstardom. These sugar-coated Scandinavians, led by super-trendy singer Lene and booming rapper Rene, captured the imagination of millions of pre-teens last year, driving the rest of us insane with the relentlessly catchy "Barbie Girl", a happy-clappy and utterly trashy Euro-pop satire on those ubiquitous playthings, Ken and Barbie. The song elicited such outrage from Barbie doll manufacturers that they took Aqua's label to court claiming unwarranted damage to their

product's squeaky-clean image. Aqua's album, *Aquarium*, containing 12 songs fashioned with the same Barbie formula – chirpy vocals, tiny techno, repetitive choruses – has sold 13 million copies worldwide.

But what with "Barbie Girl" being branded by HMV's customers as the most irritating pop song of all time, their record company knew it would take more than just a free drink to get us there. We were shamelessly

*Aqua were awarded a prize – we never discovered what for – and swiftly ushered out of the room*

wooded by the promise of a private jet adorned with the Aqua insignia, an audience with the band and a depraved night in foreign climes. As it transpired, the "private jet" was a British Airways aeroplane with a giant sticker slapped on to the tail, and the audience with the band was a five-minute press conference with a hasty handshake at the end.

Yoo couldn't help but feel sympathy for Steve and Kev, a pair of genuine Aqua fans, who, having won a

competition on MTV to fly to Copenhagen with the band, found themselves on a hand-me-down BA plane with one hundred disorderly hacks. Though they put on a brave face for most of it, at the end of the scandalously brief "meet'n'greet", they were somewhat incensed.

"We were promised 12 hours with the band and we have had 7 minutes so far," declared Kev. "This lot couldn't organise a piss-up in a brewery."

Following in the footsteps of their predecessors, 2 Unlimited and Whigfield, Aqua have displayed all the classic characteristics of the here-today-gone-tomorrow teen pop band. They project a clean-cut cartoon-like image for the parents and underpinned it with a hint of naughtiness to entice the kids. They have recognised the value of repetition, display an irrepressible predilection for kitsch, and swell with pride at the suggestion that their music is out-and-out bubblegum schlock (though after a few too many beers, a record company representative revealed it to be a "load of bollocks").

They have played it to perfection so far, having refused to show up any potential inadequacies by playing live in Britain, doing selective interviews (we are informed in no uncertain terms that there will be no private interviews on this trip), and appearing on every possible UK pop programme to hood with their

fans. And despite the efforts of the tabloids to steep them in smut – Lene was once accused of being Posh Spice's lesbian lover – their reputation has remained spotless.

But though Aqua confidently inform us during the press conference that "they are currently writing" another album due for release in the summer next year, you get the feeling that they know their number is nearly up. This at least would explain the enormous scale of our excursion.

Later on, Aqua tried to lure us into their fantastic, plastic world with fireworks, an inflatable octopus and a Peter Pan act at Copenhagen's famous Tivoli Gardens. At the start of the show, Lene bound on to the stage wearing a pair of skin-tight jeans with lasciviously located holes across her behind, shouting in Danish, "Do you want to see my arse?", while Rene gadded about in a space-man outfit. Musically, they failed to sustain any significant presence as their set became a series of extravagant gimmicks, but Steve and Kev were entranced and rolled up their sleeves to reveal Aqua tattoos on their upper arms. When interrogated, they boasted an irony-free devotion to the band. "This trip may have been a complete shambles but I still love them," said Kev. "They're just a good laugh. And let's face it, nobody will ever forget the Barbie song."



Aqua: all the gravity of a ball of fluff

Hugo Dixon

## Party animals and creature comforts



Silent movie vamp queen Siouxsie Sioux

Angela Lubrano

THE CREATURES (aka Siouxsie Sioux and drummer-consort Budgie) were always a little branch on the Banshees tree. Three years ago, the main trunk was felled and, at ULU on Friday, that little branch bloomed.

Well, sort of. The Creatures are bolstered by two newly-recruited guitarists. And as the team tumbled into the glitter-ball goth of new single "2nd Floor" a lack of cohesion was evident. The point is, Siouxsie took it in her stride. A dead ringer for Tiff's mum, Louise, in EastEnders (all bouffant bob, tight trousers and I'm-cheap-me pout) she drolly ob-

served, "Yeah, we're back, slicker than ever!"

She's a lot of things, is our Siouxsie, but she's not too cool for school. Pre-tentious, sure, but unlike the PJ Harveys of this world, also ordinary and utterly unselfconscious. On Friday, her exotic flailings, the exaggerated stuff of a silent movie vamp, often appeared ludicrous. The material – much of it from recent EP *Eraser Cut* – blurred into one long, percussive rant. And even old favourites like "Miss The Girl" failed to electrify. Yet the effect, as a whole, was moving.

Rock couples (like Tina,

REVIEW  
THE CREATURES  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON  
UNION

Sonny and Cher) tend not to do the institution of marriage any favours, but Siouxsie and one-time Slits drummer Budgie are enchanting. At one point, he strapped on a guitar and she tried a bit of Rankin-style tub-thumping. Every now and again she looked across. Each time, Budgie grinned reassurance.

With the encore, the mood turned

positively cosy. And, true to form, licentious. Siouxsie, having dispensed with the cymbals-as-breast-plates routine, had by this time stripped down to chest-clenching top, to a round of wolf whistles from her balding male fans and the sizeable lesbian contingent. She then beckoned on two strapping "gals" and merrily growled the 1983 hit "Right Now". Some might see it as pandering to the masses, but chart-friendly covers are OK by Siouxsie, even those from the Banshees oeuvre. She ends on "The Passenger" and the whole sweaty room begins to bump 'n' grind. And the gals on

stage pop their fingers. One woman shouts in my ear, "I'm not being homophobic, but I'm sick of drag queens." Everyone else, though, is tickled pink. Think Joy Division at Butlins.

"Goodnight" cried Siouxsie, as bunches of flowers flew on to the stage. "See you tomorrow!"

Tomorrow? From anyone else it would have been arrogance. But she knows what we know. Though a somewhat stunted section of the rock family tree, The Creatures' branch is still good for a swing.

CHARLOTTE O'SULLIVAN

## RIFFS

THE FIRST AND LAST RECORDS BOUGHT BY ALI CAMPBELL OF UB40

**First Record:** Dandy Livingstone *Reggae In Your Jeggae* "Suzanne Beware of the Devil" was the name of Dandy's hit in the middle Seventies, and anyone that knows reggae will know that track. My cousin Debbie had this record and she was a bit of a hippy at the time. I loved reggae music even though I could only have been eight or nine. I was only ten when the Barrett Brothers came about. For me, they invented reggae, although it was Toots (of the Maytals) who gave it the term. This album is a classic; it's reggae as it was when I was growing up. The beat is the difference in reggae, ska and

rock steady. Livingstone's reggae is the one-drop beat which changed dramatically when Sly (Dunbar) and Robbie (Shakespeare) came along.

Original reggae was an off-beat drum and on-beat bass. Then Sly and Robbie changed it around at the beginning of the Eighties to on-beat drum and off-beat bass. I have talked to Sly about this – who is my hero – and he agrees with everything I say. What I like about it is you can see reggae coming full circle; it was Aston Barrett who gave Robbie Shakespeare his first guitar when he was sixteen and the first thing he played was "Concrete Jungle" with Bob Marley and the Wail-

ers. That is why I love these people – it has nothing to do with ego – they are just delightful and love the work."

**Last Record:** Mr Don Yute and Mr Vegas sing-jays compilation tape "This stuff is going to turn the reggae scene on its arse. I live and I grow around reggae music. There is no point in me buying records because the way to get them before the normal release date is to buy compilation tapes like this, or sound-system tapes. Mr Vegas and Don Yute are absolutely brilliant superstars. After hearing this I got them to work on my new record label

with Brian Travers – Oracabessa Records. It's my third go at a label, third time lucky. We are having great success with a Mr Vegas speed garage mix. It's a crossover between garage, speed garage and dancehall – what I like to call "speed-hall". We are producing different stuff for this project called the B15 project. It's a bit like a new movement. They are all up-and-coming youths in their early twenties. Basically we are working with all the kids that are mashing it up, man. We are on fire at the moment – you can't put us out."

INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER RODGER

## SLEEVENOTES

THE ENTIRE music industry decamped to the In The City music festival in Manchester this week. With venues like The Castle being without a stage and a viewing point right next to the band, A&K men, record label bosses and talent scouts have quite literally found themselves in the backroom. The general idea of going to In The City is to visit as many venues as possible (and with six on one street, you're looking at a messy picture), do the walk, talk the talk and, as a result, get an idea of the next big thing. There are over 50 unsigned bands to digest. If the crush to see the Twisted Nerve Records showcase with Badly Drawn Boy is anything to go by, the real buzz, however, is around established acts. Otherwise, the unsigned bands are looking to emulate previous In The City success stories, such as Welsh trio Stereophonics, Kula Shaker, Catatonia, Oasis and Idlewild.

So much for "being real". All Saints' lawyers are currently putting together an out-of-court settlement with a couple of American singer-songwriters that may or may not include £200,000 of their "Never Ever" royalties. Sean Mather and

Robert Jazzeri have claimed they wrote the music for the song with Shaznay Lewis back in 1996. The band have also coughed up to Minder Music over songwriting credits for the track "Let's Get Started".

Nominations for the Music of Black Origin (MOBO) have been announced. Media coverage has picked up from last year's understated Carlton broadcast with a Channel 4 screening on 14 October. Plus they have scooped Spice Girl Mel B to co-host the show with Bill Bellamy from MTV. Nominees range from Stardust's "Music Sounds Better" to Beanie Man's "Who Am I".

Meanwhile, as R&B powerhouse Motown enjoys its 40th anniversary, its staff are wondering whether it will survive the merger between Universal Music and Polygram (which owns Motown). Despite its library of hits, it continues to falter in the face of competition from LaFace, Bad Boy and RuffHouse Records.

The sex, drugs and rock and roll lifestyle isn't satisfying all pop stars. After not acting in Australia for a decade, Kylie

Minogue is to star in two privately-financed local films.

While over in New York, grunge-hopster Beck has been doing something called "Fluxus". "(Fluxus) means stationary non-movement. It also means art without any kind of foggy artist's intentions," said Beck. With his mother, Beck shot cap guns at paper planes while shouting random phrases into a knee-high microphone.

One of our own mad geniuses, Julian Cope, has released his

third book, called *The Modern Antiquarian*. It includes poems, thoughts and fantasies inspired by the 400 megalithic sites around Britain.

Wall of Sound, that beat pioneers, has signed an international licensing deal with Virgin Records. Label guy Mark Jones signed it at QPR's Loftus Road where Virgin has reserved an executive box for him.

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**RODDY FRENCH**  
THE ROAD  
21/04/98



# THIS WEEK'S ALBUM RELEASES

REVIEWED BY ANDY GILL



**MARILYN MANSON**  
*Mechanical Animals*  
Nothing/Universal/Interscope

IN CASE you've been off-planet the past few years, Marilyn Manson is the latest American androgynous perv bogeyman, sent to terrify liberals just as much as right-wing fundamentalists. Glorifying in their anathematic stance as regards religion, morality and society in general, Marilyn and his band bear out the old Jefferson Airplane cod-revolutionary boast that "Everything they say we are, we are", diligently seeking out new and hideous forms of degradation to celebrate. And if they run out of ideas, well, so much the better. As Marilyn sneers here: "I was a nihilist, and now I'm just too fucking bored."

Following swiftly on the heels of the band's stop-gap *Remiz And Repent* package, *Mechanical Animals* offers a more sinister take on the same theme as Radiohead's "Paranoid Android", depicting a modern world in which the more noble aspects of humanity have been worn threadbare by drugs and a fixation with celebrity sleaze. Which is fair enough in principle, except that even a *Sunday Sport* gossip columnist would have to go

some to be quite as obsessed with sleaze and drugs as Marilyn Manson him/herself. The centrepiece here is the single "The Dope Show", in which, to a backing of chunky, rough-trade rock, celebrity is celebrated as narcotic in nature. To illustrate this, the band are represented in the CD booklet as a fictive unit called Omega And The Mechanical Animals, a thinly disguised take on Ziggy and the Spiders.

This is the shortcoming of *Mechanical Animals*. For all its brusque musicality - former Material singer Michael Beinhorn's production certainly gives it the focused power largely absent from its Trent Reznor-produced predecessor - it's essentially just a retread of ideas done to death by glam and punk. As Marilyn admits in "Rock Is Dead", "Rock is dead, than dead/Dead is all in your head/Your sex and your dope is all that we're fed". Which leaves them in the gutter, staring at the stars like all self-romanticising bohemians. Except that in Marilyn's view, "In space the stars are no nearer/They just glitter like a morgue". Cheers!



**EELS**  
*Electro-Shock Blues*  
DreamWorks

LIKE LOU Reed's rather more sombre multi-million-selling *Reverence* holds no great surprises, unless sustained excellence is so rare as to be surprising. Faithless blends its diverse talents - the keyboard skills of Sister Bliss, the understated rapping of Maxi Jazz, the songwriting of Jamie Catto and the programming of Rollo (who co-produces with Sister Bliss) into poised, Massive Attack-style grooves, carefully augmented here by strings, percussion, and the unobtrusive guitar of Dave Randall.

Opening with the pastoral instrumental "The Garden", as delicate as dew on spiders webs at dawn, *Sunday 8pm* reaches its peak with "I Want My Family Back", a crepuscular creep through murky streets, featuring Maxi's deadpan, clear-eyed rap about the pervasive anxiety of our society: "A crash in the economy robbed me of my family/And no strategy combats negative equity/So that's it/Like violence, it's drastic". A subtle, intelligent performance which helps restore faith in a genre tremulously prone to violent boasting and sexist crowing. Elsewhere, guest vocalists Boy George, Rachel Brown and Dido provide alternative focuses of interest, the latter most impressively on "Hem Of His Garment", turning the old gospel plea inside out by admitting she has been "touched by the hem of his garment".



**FAITHLESS**  
*Sunday 8pm*  
Chesley

THIS EAGERLY-awaited follow-up to 1996's multi-million-selling *Reverence* holds no great surprises, unless sustained excellence is so rare as to be surprising. Faithless blends its diverse talents - the keyboard skills of Sister Bliss, the understated rapping of Maxi Jazz, the songwriting of Jamie Catto and the programming of Rollo (who co-produces with Sister Bliss) into poised, Massive Attack-style grooves, carefully augmented here by strings, percussion, and the unobtrusive guitar of Dave Randall.

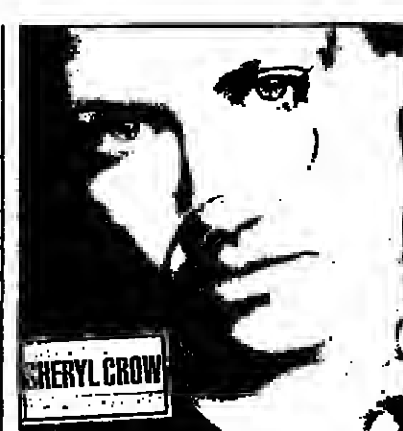
Opening with the pastoral instrumental "The Garden", as delicate as dew on spiders webs at dawn, *Sunday 8pm* reaches its peak with "I Want My Family Back", a crepuscular creep through murky streets, featuring Maxi's deadpan, clear-eyed rap about the pervasive anxiety of our society: "A crash in the economy robbed me of my family/And no strategy combats negative equity/So that's it/Like violence, it's drastic". A subtle, intelligent performance which helps restore faith in a genre tremulously prone to violent boasting and sexist crowing. Elsewhere, guest vocalists Boy George, Rachel Brown and Dido provide alternative focuses of interest, the latter most impressively on "Hem Of His Garment", turning the old gospel plea inside out by admitting she has been "touched by the hem of his garment".



**THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS**  
*Brothers Gonna Work It Out*  
Freestyle Dust/Virgin

NOT THE third Chemical Brothers album proper, but that least enticing of contemporary artforms, a DJ Mix album. But where some DJ mixes barely even bother to segue properly between their bought-by-the-batch disco cuts, in Tom and Ed's case it's more appropriate to talk in terms of sound sculpture. Here, they offer five tracks of between 10 and 20 minutes apiece, each mixed from about the same number of records, with fragments from such as Kenny Dope, Love Corporation and the Unique 3 spun into new sonic concoctions.

The most entertaining is probably the opening mix, which effortlessly spans decades by blending Willie Hutch's "Brother's Gonna Work It Out" with the Jimmy Castor Bunch's "It's Just Begun" and a couple of the Brothers' own numbers; and the fourth track, on which they pay homage to influences like Renegade Soundwave and Meat Beat Manifesto, with the latter's "Mars Needs Women" answered by the cry of "I want my planet back" from Dubtribe Sound System's "Mother Earth". Also included are their charmingly idiosyncratic remixes of the Manics' "Everything Must Go" - from which just about everything has indeed gone - and Spiritualized's "I Think I'm In Love", which brings things to a suitably chilled conclusion.



**SHERYL CROW**  
*The Globe Sessions*  
A&M

HER THIRD album extends Sheryl Crow's songcraft in several directions, the most appealing of which is the warm, rolling "It Don't Hurt", a carnival whirl of organ, autoharp, violin and National guitar whipped to a light froth by Crow and mixer Tehad Blake. Less appealing is the streak of Alanis-style psychodrama that has crept into songs like "Am I Getting Through (Parts 1 & 2)", a fearsome baroque rather like overhearing an argument in a restaurant.

In between are more of the sort of songs which are Crow's stock-in-trade: glib, oddly pointless tales which sound like songs, but not in any compelling sense. There's no suggestion that you might encounter mystery or revelation in them, just a shaggy-dog narrative with an attitude. She encapsulates her own problem in the Tinseltown shallowness of "There Goes The Neighborhood", where "the movie of the screenplay of a book about a girl who loved a junkie" swiftly degenerates into apathetic irony: "We can't be certain who the villains are 'cos everyone's so pretty/But the after-party's sure to be a thing as it moves into your city." The Dylan song, "Mississippi", a singalong rumour, lent a curious gipsy flavour by olin and Chamberlain strings, rather shows up her material - and shows that Bob can still crank out a surefire hit if fancy takes him, too.

## LYRIC SHEETS MARTIN NEWELL

The Musician's Union have written to the *Inland Revenue* asking that rock musicians be allowed to draw their private pensions at 35 years of age, rather than at the current lowest limit of 50. Their argument is that pop stardom, in some cases, is a short-lived career.



### Pop Stars' Pensions

Direct debit Elephants' Graveyard  
The end of The Yellow Brick Road  
Where the man from The Primitives  
Rings a man from the Who  
To ask for his sorting code

The sensible matter of pensions  
For the short-lived supremos of rock  
Where you call Sun Life  
Cos your second wife  
Wants the giveaway radio clock

When it's time for a personal pension  
And the game's moved on up the field  
Should you quell your fears  
Buying "added years"  
To top up the main-scheme yield?

Should you take up a hobby like gardening  
Bid adieu to the world of Mammo  
When a gram of toot's  
No substitute  
For a nice bit of sockeye salmon?

If you want to move into "Dungiggin"  
At the end of a brilliant career  
You should have enough cash  
For the Rotary bash  
On a 9 per cent growth rate per year

For the keenest of fans will stop coming  
And the comedown's too awful to mention  
Stadium toadium  
Via London Palladium  
Pity the star with no pension.

## Heaven is when life is sweet

TWO SONGS into "A Close Encounter with Maria McKee" and the erstwhile Lone Justice singer is crying "Suicide!" She could be singing about the effect her last album seems to have had on her career.

McKee once won over the masses with the horribly lightweight "Show Me Heaven" but her towering 1996 album *Life is Sweet* ditched MTV-friendly fluff for a sound pitched somewhere between John Cale, David Bowie, Patti Smith and, at a pinch, Suede. Mixing avant-garde song structures and baroque orchestrations

with red raw vocals, raging guitar abuse, intricately confessional lyrics and a soaring pop streak, it was a brave and brilliant way of reinventing herself.

Of course, almost no one bought it and McKee consequently lost her recording deal with Geffen. Which is why she is playing this touching-base gig, showcasing new material and stripping the epics from *Life is Sweet* down for a three-piece line-up. At first, the tension of playing it so bare shows. McKee snaps at a heckler (they asked for it) who moans about her sitting down,

**MARIA MCKEE**  
DINGWALLS  
LONDON

and on the usually plaintive "Life is Sweet" attacks her guitar like it has just said something obscene about her mother. One song in, and she already sounds like her own orchestra.

That it soon makes sense is because these songs thrive on melodrama. "I'm chucking now," McKee grins, "but guess what's coming next." A breathtakingly overwrought "I'm Not

Listening" follows, sounding more like a deranged tribute to *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* than ever.

Even the magnificently murky and swaggering "This Perfect Dress" works, short of its crescendo of quivering guitars and aching strings, probably because *Life is Sweet*'s extravagant arrangements grow organically from the songs anyway.

Regardless of the minimal delivery, the new material sounds more ambitious and uncompromising still. If having no record deal has given Maria

McKee the opportunity to do what she wants then, in the short term at least, it's a fine thing.

"Be My Joy" transcends its gauche title with some ragged lurches in tempo and a spare litany of the insecurities that plague relationships, while another ooe builds like "Life is Sweet" spliced with Suede's "New Generation", and features some beautifully earthy lyrics about "our heads down the toilet".

It is bizarre to think that this woman's record sales probably suffered from comparisons

with Alanis Morissette 10 years back, when women were cranked-up guitars were consciously lumped together, one glossy magazine cover story after another. In reality, the comparison stretches little further than them both being women who sing.

"I'm so full of grand ideas," McKee sings on a new song. Try saying that about Ms Morissette. Now all she needs is a label brave enough to sign her, so that we can hear them properly.

KEVIN HARLEY

## Definitely mad, but there's a rhythm to it

ORDINARY BANDS find themselves a new singer through a wanted ad in the music press. But German avant-garde rockers Can were no ordinary band. Having lost their previous frontman to psychiatric advice, they discovered 21-year-old Damo Suzuki basking in Munich in 1970. Apparently risking starvation through his ineptitude, he was recruited on the spot, making his debut that very night.

The hugely influential band, created as an experiment in different musical approaches rather than a vehicle to perform conventional songs, anticipated many trends now accepted in

the mainstream, with their emphasis on rhythm over structure and their love of repetition. Their influence on acts as disparate as Primal Scream, Happy Mondays and American noodlers Tortoise is profound. And they all had excellent intellectual credentials, of course: most of them were in their thirties and some had studied with Stockhausen. Yet the presence of a Japanese hippie, struggling with the English language - no, any language - remains vivid in the memory. After three years, Suzuki became a Jehovah's Witness and quit music.

**DAMO SUZUKI**  
NETWORK  
THE GARAGE, LONDON

And that would be that - just another German Seventies cultural curiosity like urban terrorism, the Green movement: a Maoist captain of the national football team complete with funky afro. But the sell out crowd is curious to see Suzuki's first serious performance in two decades, and delightfully he seems to have stepped out of an old photograph with long hair, beard, and dreadful striped cotton trousers. Backed by various

Krautrock veterans, including Can-mate Michael Karoli, ace drummer Mani Neumeier of Guru Guru, and crack saxophonist Gert Dudeck, they kicked hard into what was basically two hours of improvised jazz-rock, often the worst music in the world but tonight frequently astonishing.

Young guitarist Alexander Schnert, separated at birth from Karoli circa 1972, was at pains to point out that the musicians had not played together before, but there were few clues, save the inevitable collapse at each number's finish. The sheer rhythmic kick, carried by bassist Mandiao Fati,

was distinctly reminiscent of that other defiantly unclassifiable Seventies outfit, Funkadelic, while Suzuki happily rambled indecipherably.

Only three Can songs were performed, including a primitive "Mother Sky" and a frantic "Halleluwah", though their signature sound of murky basslines and taut echoing snare was intact throughout, and Dudeck was incoherent on the quite brilliant encore of "Mushroom". Best of all, a primitive soul groove became a euphoric marvel, Suzuki yelling an impromptu hook,

calling us all "beautiful people" as the audience filled the stage. Damo was so reluctant to leave, you suspect he was an outstandingly persistent Jehovah's Witness.

With Germany currently producing interesting and approachable experimental music from the likes of Tarwater and Mouse On Mars, it seems an ideal time to reappraise its heritage. Unbelievably, this didn't sound like a middle-aged jam fest, it sounded like a living alternative. Still mad, and definitely still a star.

STEVE JELBERT

## Simply blue

**SIMPLY RED**  
LYCEUM THEATRE  
LONDON

TOO OFTEN, the sound bite culture reduces talent to a few tabloid catch-phrases. Mick Hucknall, the man who is Simply Red, is portrayed as a womanising pop star when he's not vilified as a tax exile supporter of Tony Blair's Labour Government.

However, these clichés can make us ignore the most crucial thing about the singer's voice. Opening a series of sold-out concerts at the prestigious, yet intimate, Lyceum (not used as a music venue since the mid-Eighties), Hucknall grabs the chance to re-establish himself as what he essentially is an emotive interpreter of both his and other people's material.

Launching into the jazzy "Sad Old Red", Hucknall throws a few shapes like a seasoned soul pro, resplendent in a designer silk ensemble. "Come and take me home," he

jokingly leers to the predominantly female audience, before switching to a cover of Neil Young's "Mellow My Mind". Hucknall has impeccable taste, for the most part. When he's not collaborating with Crusader Joe Sample or Lamont Dozier, or giving his own financial backing to Blood and Fire, the re-release reggae label, he's covering Gregory Isaacs' sleazy "Night Nurse", Dennis Brown's "Ghetto Girl" or Barry White's sensuous "It's Only Love".

Indeed, as red drapes fall behind the 12-piece orchestra, the fireplay continues and we enter the boudoir with "Thrill Me". As documented in the self-penned songs of the current *Blue* album, the singer has suffered in love himself re-

cently and, at times, seems to be performing accordingly, though neither an inflection, nor a rasp are ever out of time.

Beaming through a crowd-pleasing finale of "Holding Back The Years", "Stars" and "The Valentine Brothers' "Money's Too Tight To Mention", before encooring with "If You Don't Know Me By Now", "Something Got Me Started" and the joyous "Fairground", the Simply Red frontman proves time and time again that his music has little in common with the designer funk of M-People or Lisa Stansfield. Rather, it belongs to the great British tradition of blue-eyed soul that embraces Rod Stewart, Robert Palmer and Paul Young.

A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper  
PIERRE FERRONE

**STEVE COOGAN**

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THE DEBUTS OF A NEW STAR



# To the voice, with love

The composer Jonathan Dove thrives on possibility. So when Glyndebourne asked him to create a 'community' opera, his imagination soared. By Edward Seckerson

Jonathan Dove's shortest piece lasts a mere 30 seconds and has been heard literally hundreds of times. During 1995 - the BBC's British Music Year and Purcell Tercentenary - you couldn't switch on Radio 3 without hearing it. Even Brian Kay's *Sunday Morning* show adopted it. It was the very model of a modern musical monogram, a logo with aspirations, a jingle with airs.

Two airs actually, both by Purcell. Dove's brief was simple: gestate from a period to present day sound, make it pithy and proud and inquisitively memorable. And so his piping rendition of "Hark, the Echoing Air" effloresced into a sumptuous sonnet of Purcell's greatest hit, "Fairiest Isle", and all in no more time than it takes to sell the very latest brand of environmentally friendly detergent.

But you learnt a lot about Jonathan Dove from those 30 seconds: his personality, his wit, his sense of timing, his love of melody and ear for sonority, and his ability to inhabit the moment and make it count. To make more of less, and make it to measure. In the few seconds that it takes "Fairiest Isle" to achieve lift-off, a tiny drama has been enacted. The duration may be fleeting but the scale is operatic; the theatricality inescapable.

Then you learn that, as a boy, Dove designed and built model theatres in which his creative imagination was fuelled by ever more elaborate lighting and special effects, and that for the past eight years he's been music adviser to the Almeida Theatre ("advising Jonathan Kent to use his music"), underscoring the drama of every crisis to befall the likes of Medea, Hamlet, and currently Phèdre. A pattern begins to emerge in which, as we see where this eminently practical, hands-on musician is coming from...

On account of his love of singing ("other people's"), he initially served his apprenticeship as a répétiteur (a rehearsal pianist) for opera. He wanted better to understand these unique musicians whose instruments and bodies were one and the same. He imagined himself as a Mozart or a Rossini, tailoring music to very specific individuals.

His piano playing was, by all accounts, "orchestral". Which stood him in good stead when the City of Birmingham Touring Opera - a company dedicated to refreshing the parts opera doesn't normally reach - asked him to arrange a series of major works for small orchestra. All that time spent staring at the dots on the page, asking him-

self why they were there, what effect they were having, had suddenly paid off with interest.

In substituting a chamber orchestra for a symphony orchestra, you're obviously aiming for the same effect, the same feeling. But you can't achieve that simply by taking instruments away. You have to put something else back...

His daring two (instead of four) evening adaptations of Wagner's *Ring* (or *Ringlet* as it was known at



The first music we hear in 'Flight' reaches out to the blue beyond, borne aloft on arpeggiated air currents

(the time) put more back than anyone could have imagined possible. This was the Powerbook as opposed to the Desktop Ring. Faster, sleeker, but big on megabytes. Believing it was possible made it possible.

Dove chases possibilities like most people chase solutions. A conversation with him is nothing if not tangential. Even as he offers you an opinion, he is busily considering the alternatives, diving down yet another blind alley just for the hell of it. The point is, he says, you never quite know what you'll find there.

When Glyndebourne Opera asked him to get involved in local Community Opera projects, it was the "not knowing" which attracted him. The idea that a whole community could help compose and then sing its own story, that you could harness the energies of hundreds of people, whatever their mu-

sical skills, excited far more than it intimidated him.

So what if all that turned up on your first day were 25 grade five flautists, a corps of drums, an accordion band and a yodelling harmonica player (yes, really). That, says Dove, is liberating, idea-making; that is when the imagination really kicks in. And where it leads, you follow.

In Hastings, it was the ballroom at the end of the pier. In Ashford, a team of graffiti artists (some awaiting trial, some working off their community service) transformed the local sports centre to tell of the impact of Eurotunnel on their close-knit town. When French workmen finally broke through the tunnel wall, the accordion band came in very handy. Most recently, there was In Search of Angels - the building of Peterborough Cathedral, culminating in 600 amateur performers promading to the local shopping mall where angels came down the escalators.

So never let it be said that Dove hasn't journeyed to arrive at his first full-length opera for a major house. It's called *Flight* and takes off from Glyndebourne next Thursday, courtesy of Glyndebourne Touring Opera (it lands in the main house next summer), in a production by Richard Jones. The libretto is by April de Angelis and took as its starting point the true story of a refugee living in Charles de Gaulle Airport.

*Flight* - the opera, the concept, the word - conjures up many associations for Dove: excitement, adventure, escape, dreams, an encounter with things foreign. The airport is the place where many stories meet. Everyday stories, but here they take on a magical and mythical aura.

And so the first music we hear reaches out to the blue beyond (sky music), an aspiring theme borne aloft on arpeggiated air currents, the natural sound of the harmonic series. It's a singing theme, just as *Flight* is a "singing" opera. Typically for Dove, it's led by his vocal lines, and they in turn by a songfulness which instantly betrays his love of the human voice. The effect, he says, is invariably much fuller and richer than can be accounted for by just the notes on the page. That's singers for you - their personality, their individuality; their "special" notes.

Melody is always there for Dove. Pulse is always there, too. The combination of both gives his music its imperative. It's little wonder his favourite composer is Igor Stravinsky. But melody prevails. Melody would seem to be the channel through which everything in Dove's music flows. In that, he is truly a child of the lyric stage.



Jonathan Dove, above, and the poster for his new opera, *Flight*, above left

Emma Boom

When his musical personality comes into contact with a line of text, melody will out. He's drawn to melody that bears some relationship to the most natural kind of song - to folksong. Which means that it doesn't imply a continually shifting harmony. It is what it is. And there's more than a dash of musical comedy in his flights of vocal fancy. He likes Stephen Sondheim (don't we all). But he likes singers better than Sondheim does. And it shows.

"I suppose you could say that I'm drawn to drama but need to proceed in a lyric way. I love hearing other

people's explosions of angst, neurosis and cosmic annihilation, but I can't do it myself. So I suppose I'm constantly searching for a lyric expression for dramatic situations."

So is everything Dove writes essentially theatrical? Is all his music driven by an extra-musical narrative of some kind? He pauses for thought. Another debate is brewing. My tape is running out. "I suppose you always want to avoid starting with a blank page. So a piece like my 'Saxophone Quartet' began with a series of abstract musical ideas but only really began turning

into a piece when I imagined a group of four friends reunited after a long absence and gradually settling upon one subject that all four wanted to talk about in some depth and collective harmony."

So the musical gamesmanship - which Dove enjoys - usually involves the free association of ideas. Dove's is freer than most. When BT commissioned him to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Association of British Orchestras, his fertile imagination took this course: British orchestras, celebration, bells, bell-ringing, "this ringing isle" (Han-

del's description of the British Isles because of its bell-ringing tradition), this scripted isle, Prospero... And so there emerged a semi-pictorial, semi-aural image of a magical tinny island, seen at first from a distance but gradually drawing closer. *The Ringing Isle* took shape.

Benjamin Britten was once asked what he regarded as the main requirements for an opera composer. He replied: "The ability to write many different kinds of music." I guess we now know where that leaves Jonathan Dove. *Opens Thurs (booking: 01273 813813)*

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## ON THE AIR

THE WEEK ON RADIO REVIEWED BY BAYAN NORTHCOTT

SO FAREWELL, then, Record Review - venerable Radio 3 companion to countless Saturday mornings. "People don't want to hear about a lot of crackly old vinyl," Hilary Boulding, Radio 3 Commissioning Editor, Music (Policy), has allegedly remarked. Accordingly, the programme's three regular presenters, Richard Osborne, Anthony Burton and Jonathan Swain, with their vasty varied range of expertise, have been sacked; the surveys of archive re-issues, and, doubtless, the earnest discussions of contemporary music releases, largely abandoned. Instead, we have CD Review, fronted by the single, bland persona of Andrew McGregor, fresh from *On Air*.

Admittedly one tried and trusted feature remains: *Building a Library* - though demoted from the programme's opening 40 minutes to a slot two thirds through and, in last Saturday's first edition, reduced to half an hour. Yet what exemplary use the inimitable Geoffrey Smith of *Jazz Record Requests* made of the time in his survey of nine current recordings of Gershwin's *An American in Paris*. The work's origins and structure were deftly outlined and precise insights were offered into its pacing and style. Excitement can be generated without bomb-

ast, Smith argued, and too many conductors fail to realise that the dance tune of Gershwin's final section is a twenties Charleston, not a thirties Big Band number - and should be played with a clipped ragtime based elegance. But as for the rest... Where *Record Review* devoted up to a third of its three-hour format to playing complete pieces from the discs under discussion, the new programme proposes to give over some 40 minutes to a single Disc of the Week - last Saturday the re-issue of Carlos Kleiber's justly famous but, by now, pretty familiar recording of Beethoven's Seventh. And before that - as if three and a half hours of Joan Bakewell's *Artist of the Week*, Sean Rafferty's daily *In Time* interviews and now a new Saturday afternoon series of *Artists' Question Time*, were not enough - we have yet another artist interview slot. Granted, that gifted young tenor Ian Bostridge is more articulate than most, and had some interesting things to say on escaping the shadow of Peter Pears. But in general, one suspects this plethora of artists' chat is simply cheaper to put on than more focused features.

Yet the real limitation of *CD Review* looks like being its paucity of actual reviews. McGregor himself offered a brief opening selection of recent releases plus a mid-point Bargain Basement trawl of cheaper discs with such original observations as "Sostakovich really wearing his heart on his sleeve" and "sounds as though it should hold its own." And after Geoffrey Smith's Gershwin McGregor finished with some vaguely jazz-related releases. The most ominous item, however, was the one so-called Special Interest review: last Saturday, Lucy Skeaping on Baroque Certos. For it was difficult to believe that a musician as informed as Ms Skeaping could write such a script, or that producers as competent as Clive Portbury and Susan Kenyon should consent to record it, without the heaviest pressure from above to spoon-feed "accessibility" like pap. "There's an awful lot of talk these days about authenticity," she brightly began, as if we had all been born yesterday. Later she suggested that JS Bach would have found it as difficult to understand the music of his sons, as "Bip Hop to those of us raised on Frank Sinatra". But the ultimate was her kindergarten-ey praise of a vinyl release: "You'd find it hard to have on as background music - but then you wouldn't do that, would you?" Oh, puke.

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# Mahler. And nothing but

This weekend one of the world's leading Mahlerians will sweep into London to preside over a symposium, launch a budget edition of his prize-winning Mahler recording and conduct some Mahler at the Royal Albert Hall. He has recently been giving Mahler masterclasses to fledgling conductors in St Petersburg, and he will soon be doing the same in London. Gilbert Kaplan is, by any standards, a hot gun.

But the funny thing is this: apart from the Adagio of Mahler's Fifth Symphony (as in Visconti's film, *Death in Venice*) the only music Kaplan conducts is Mahler's gigantic Second Symphony.

Flatter him or better him, you will never get him to conduct anything else. For this 56-year-old New York publishing millionaire is determined to preserve the purity of his obsession, which began when he was taken by a friend to a rehearsal of the *Adagio* work.

"It was like a bolt of lightning going through me," he says. "I can't explain why, I could describe all its remarkable aspects, but you could say the same of Beethoven's Ninth or Mozart's G Minor. I can only liken it to a love affair; where you can say how you feel, but not why."

He spent the next year acquiring the elements of the conductor's craft, and travelled the world attending every performance of the



MICHAEL CHURCH

*Gilbert Kaplan's strength is that he has absorbed every indication Mahler made on the score*

symphony he could find. Then, exercising the privilege of wealth, he hired an orchestra and conducted it himself. "That was supposed to be the first and last time I ever conducted," he says. "It was never my ambition to become a conductor. Even now, I don't regard myself as part of the conducting profession - I don't agree with amateurs meddling in a professional world."

Yet this is a man who gives masterclasses! You could not wish for a neater conundrum. Is conducting, like photography - on a good day we can all take Cartier-Bressons - a mere knack?

Some surprising people think so.

including violinist Pinchas Zukerman, who periodically does it himself and regards it as the most bizarre profession of all time. "Well, think about it," he barks. "You're the one person on stage who's facing the wrong way. And how much does the orchestra need you? Very little."

One thinks also of the LPO violinist quoted in Danny Danziger's notorious book, *The Orchestra*: "If you put an egg-beater in front of us, we would still produce a good performance." On the other hand there is plenty of testimony - from players adept at spotting frauds - to the spell woven by the Furtwänglers and Karajans. So where does Kaplan stand?

He does not think physical technique matters much. "No two great conductors do it in remotely the same way, and everyone has their own vocabulary of gesture."

The mark of a good conductor, he says, is the ability to create the sound he has in his head, "always assuming his ideas are good". This, for him, the crux and this is why he feels entitled to give masterclasses on his chosen work. "I hand out one simple page of the score, and ask the students to mark the things they would look out for. And they usually focus on two or three points. Then I give them another copy of the page where I've put 16 arrows, indicating the points I think are important. Then we discuss, and that discussion can go on for five or six hours."

His strength is that he has absorbed every tiny indication Mahler made on the printed score the owns the manuscript, and has published a facsimile edition. "A little more of this, a little less of that, something to create a gasp - that's what makes the music Mahlerian."

And no, he never gets bored with it. "I follow Mahler's rule that in every performance a work must be reborn. Every time I study a clean, unmarked copy of this score I find something I've missed."

For a businessman with no musical training, who puts in five days a week at the office, all this is disarmingly impressive, as is the fact that he is currently showing his Surrealist art collection in Chicago, but even that brings him back on track.

"Mahler may predate Surrealism, but he had as much connection with it as Debussy had with Impressionism. His music puts side-by-side some very contradictory pictures."

Meanwhile, wearing yet another hat, Kaplan is now a board member of London's South Bank Centre, which he wants to see taking more creative risks than hitherto. "Better to fail," he says, "than not to try." That is the spirit in which he will take up his baton on 5 October at the Albert Hall.

DEPARTMENT OF premature gush: last Friday I described English National Opera as "a ship in fine shape". Well, fairly fine: on that

same day, ENO premiered a khaki, Carry On-style *Otello* which climaxed with all-in wrestling on a camp-bed (the Moor narrowly won on points). How could this happen?

Well, it seems reformed-revolutionary director David Freeman is liked by ENO - so easy to work with, such a contrast to "difficult" Graham Vick, whose superb *Butterfly*, as it happens, is to be revived tonight. When it comes to reviving *Otello*, they should junk the Freeman travesty and re-stage its predecessor - if it has not been binned - by a certain Dr J Miller.

LIVING IN the shadow of Sadler's Wells, I have watched with amazement its progress towards rebirth. No cock-ups, no stoppages, still at the hard-hat stage, but perfectly on course for its opening in four weeks' time. The sight-lines are excellent, the seats give comfortable leg-room, the place is already looking good. But this week its bosses have been desperately trying to stave off disaster, after learning - from the papers - that the Royal Opera's current mismanagers have cut the RO's planned 25-week season at Sadler's Wells next year.

Sadler's Wells should take heart from a statement in last week's chirpy ROH press release: "There are no short-term cash flow difficulties at the ROH." Screw them for every penny!



Mahler devotee Gilbert Kaplan practising what he preaches

## Battle of the centenarians

The classical record industry's two oldest giants are celebrating birthdays in lavish style. By Rob Cowan

THE TRADITIONAL pre-Christmas CD avalanche will gain extra momentum this autumn when two centenarian record labels each launch a celebratory reissue initiative. EMI has 100 "Great Recordings of the Century" and Deutsche Grammophon has its "Centenary Collection". Both series are offered at mid-price, both employ state-of-the-art refurbishment techniques; both are available as single discs, and both will feature favourites, though the differences between them - musical, conceptual and historical - are fairly dramatic.

EMI is phasing its release over a two-year period, with 25 titles due next month, two further groups of 25 due next year, and the remainder to follow in 2000. DG, on the other hand, is giving us the whole package in October. As I write, 63 discs sit on my desk, arranged by year and starting at 1897, when Emil Berliner the original pioneer of mass-produced 78s, recorded a spoken letter to his sister-in-law. The Municipal Military Band, London took to the studio a year later with Sousa's "Hail to the Spirit of Liberty", but beam up 43 years on, to Nazi Berlin, and we encounter a 1941 recording of Mozart's Requiem where all references to Jewish biblical names have been expunged (for example, "in Jerusalem" becomes "in terra").

DG's sets end with super-charged Beethoven recorded by the Emerson String Quartet in 1997, but chances are that at least a handful of your favoured artists will have cropped up somewhere in between. DG's "disc by year" principle prop-

erly starts from 1948 (the previous 50 years are condensed on to the first 10 CDs), which means that collectors who would rather avoid shellac surface noise can plunge straight in with crackle-free tape.

The Germans were already recording on tape during the last war, whereas the new technology took longer to reach these



Karajan's Ring cycle stars on DG's centenary CDs

shores. Which is where EMI's roster starts. Perhaps "Great Recordings" should read "Great Sellers", unless you count André Previn's LSO Gershwin or clarinetist Sabine Meyer's Mozart as among the century's recorded miracles. I do not - though when it comes to Klempner's Brahms German Requiem, Furtwängler's Beethoven Ninth and Richter's Schubert Wanderer Fantasy, lofty reputations are fully justified.

DG prefers the epithet "landmark to great", though I would count Michelangelo's Debussy Images, Kubelik's Mahler

Fourth and Jochum's Bruckner Seventh as equal to anything on EMI's short-list. Some will shake their heads over the inclusion of odd excerpts from longer works. Most of us would prefer the more reliable evidence of complete performances.

Still, the "Centenary Collection" steals a decided lead on its EMI rival by reinstating to the catalogue some fabulous performances that have never previously appeared on the domestic CD market. I would cite the set that takes us from 1948 to 1957 (459 067-3, 10 CDs) as being of particular value. There you have such rostrum firebrands as Ferenc Fricsay, who galvanizes his players for a white-hot Tchaikovsky's Fifth, and the young Lorin Maazel, a passionate guide through *Romeo and Juliet* as rendered by Berlioz, Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev. A youthful Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau balances sensual tone and phrasal intelligence in his first DG recording of Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and the Amadeus Quartet give their inimitable interpretation of Schubert's G major Quartet.

Later volumes feature extended (and very well chosen) excerpts from Herbert von Karajan's complete Ring cycle and such current "house" favourites as Claudio Abbado, Anne Sofie von Otter, Gil Shaham, Christian Thielemann, John Eliot Gardiner and Mikhail Pletnev. The idea, one presumes, is to establish a sort of "centennial continuum", give each period and each artist due acknowledgement, then leave the critical verdict to the one reliable judge: posterity.

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## What speed Wagner?

ALMOST EXACTLY a year ago, the Netherlands Opera introduced Wagner's *Das Rheingold* into their repertoire and so embarked on their first Ring. They will perform the complete cycle four times next June. Over the cycle's previous three parts, Hartmut Haenchen's conducting was shown up as lightweight, while the playing of the Netherlands Philharmonic, the casting and Pierre Audi's production proved consistently worthwhile. Perhaps I was not the only one to criticise the conductor, since he contributes a long, fascinating article to the programme, arguing that faster tempi are what Wagner always wanted. A statistical table shows how contemporary interpreters tend to lengthen the music. Haenchen estimates his own timing at a nippy 13 hours and 50 minutes, seven minutes faster than Pierre Boulez in 1976, 9 minutes slower than Josef Keilberth in

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1952... I set off determined to listen open-eyed, ready to be convinced by and converted to Haenchen's "authentic" interpretation. In the event, his performance of *Götterdämmerung* often dragged; he discovered hints of Sousa in Siegfried's Funeral March and turned the ending into a vainglorious, sentimental and vulgarly sustained blare.

Pierre Audi's production places even more emphasis than usual on Brünnhilde, who exudes throughout most of the Funeral March. Unfortunately, Jeannine Altmeyer proved the major weakness in a strong cast, moving too often in a series of jerky, inhibited lunges, her singing generalised and distorted by harsh, forced tone.

She was not helped by the costume designer, Elio Isidoro, who never let her out of gloves. Kurt Rydl's splendidly virile, bare-chested Hagen compelled attention, and Heinze Kruse portrayed Siegfried in a refreshingly unassuming manner and made the role sound easy. Wolfgang Schöne's fabulous Gunther, Eva-Maria Bundschuh's sensuous Gutrune, Anne Gjevang's fearlessly intense Waltraute, the first-rate Norms and Rhinedaughters all made good use of the walkway around the pit, enhancing their impact on the audience. George Tsypin contributed an impressive set, which was lit brilliantly by Wolfgang Göbel and animated by Amir Hoseinpour's choreography: the Gibichungs became automata, at once comic and sinister. *Götterdämmerung* is on 20, 22 and 30 September. Box office: 00 31 20 6255 455

ANTONY PRATHE



# The barrister who is game for anything

For Michael Beloff QC, going part-time means working in Kuala Lumpur, Jersey and Oxford. By John-Paul Flintoff

EVER HEARD of a lawyer settling your problem overnight? It sounds unlikely. But that's precisely what Michael Beloff claims he can do.

The circumstances, admittedly, are unusual. The Hon Michael Beloff QC - to give him his full title - is currently working at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur. He's the only lawyer from Europe on the six-strong panel of the International Court of Arbitration, a group of lawyers originally established to settle disputes at the Olympics. Why Beloff? Because he decided, two years ago, to stop working full-time at the Bar. In doing so, he made himself available for a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

If something does come up at the Games, it is likely to be a doping case, an infringement of the advertising arrangements, or perhaps an appeal against some decision. Whatever the problem, it will need a hasty resolution: "The object is to stop people from whizzing off to domestic courts," he explains. "Otherwise you might get some judge putting a stop to the entire games."

Later this month, Beloff will sit for a couple of weeks on the Court of Appeal in the Channel Islands, which, to be frank, sounds relaxing. "It's a marvellous job," says Beloff. "A distinctive legal system, and you can walk along the beach in the sun and go paddling at dawn."

One other thing that keeps him busy is sitting on the Senior Salaries Review Board, in charge of judicial salaries. "When I was full-time at the Bar, I tried to do pro bono (free) work. Now, if someone wants my time, I can give it free, rather than charging, and feel rather better doing that."

Until a couple of years ago, Beloff earned as much as £1m a year as one of the country's leading advocates. Sporting disputes were one particular specialism. A reasonable athlete himself ("I won the 100 yards at Eton"), he acted in most of the major doping cases in athletics, and acted for Tottenham Hotspur when the team was excluded from the FA Cup, and had six points deducted for financial irregularities back in the Eighties. "But this was the Nineties,

and we argued that it was unfair," he says. As a fellow barrister put it, in 1994: "[Beloff] does too much work for his own health - about 15 hours a day." But then, in 1996, he became President of Trinity College, Oxford. Many people would have settled for that, but instead of giving up his old job, Beloff decided to combine the two. So, these days, he divides his time between Oxford and London's Holland Park. After a dinner in college, he says, "I can usually be released by 8.30pm, and be back at my house in London by midnight, for a day in chambers."

During term time, his legal practice is slightly limited because he has made a commitment never to miss a meeting of the college governors. Beloff spends an increasing proportion of his time giving legal opinions. He is drafting a new code of discipline for accountants, and recently drafted General Medical Council guidance for doctors on patient confidentiality.

But he still acts for a wide range of notable clients. One is a vicar who was defrocked by the Church of Wales. Another is Shepherd Neame, the independent brewer which is challenging the Government over increases in beer excise. When Geoffrey Robinson MP got into hot water about his overseas trusts, he consulted Beloff. But perhaps the highest profile client is Mohamed al Fayed: for some years, Beloff has advised on the Harrods owner's applications for British citizenship.

The Trinity job provides plenty to interest him. As well as running the college, Beloff is a trustee of the Oxford Union, and of Chertwell, he organises debates at Trinity, and invites a wide range of guests to college dinners. So will he give up the Bar? "I could be tempted, but in a single week I could earn as much as in a whole year at Trinity."

Beloff, plainly, is not the sort to take life easy. "I can never sit still," he says. "The idea of crashing out or listening to music for hours and looking at the ceiling - I never did that." Still only 56, he has an alarming message: "Time is running out, and I must cram in a good deal."

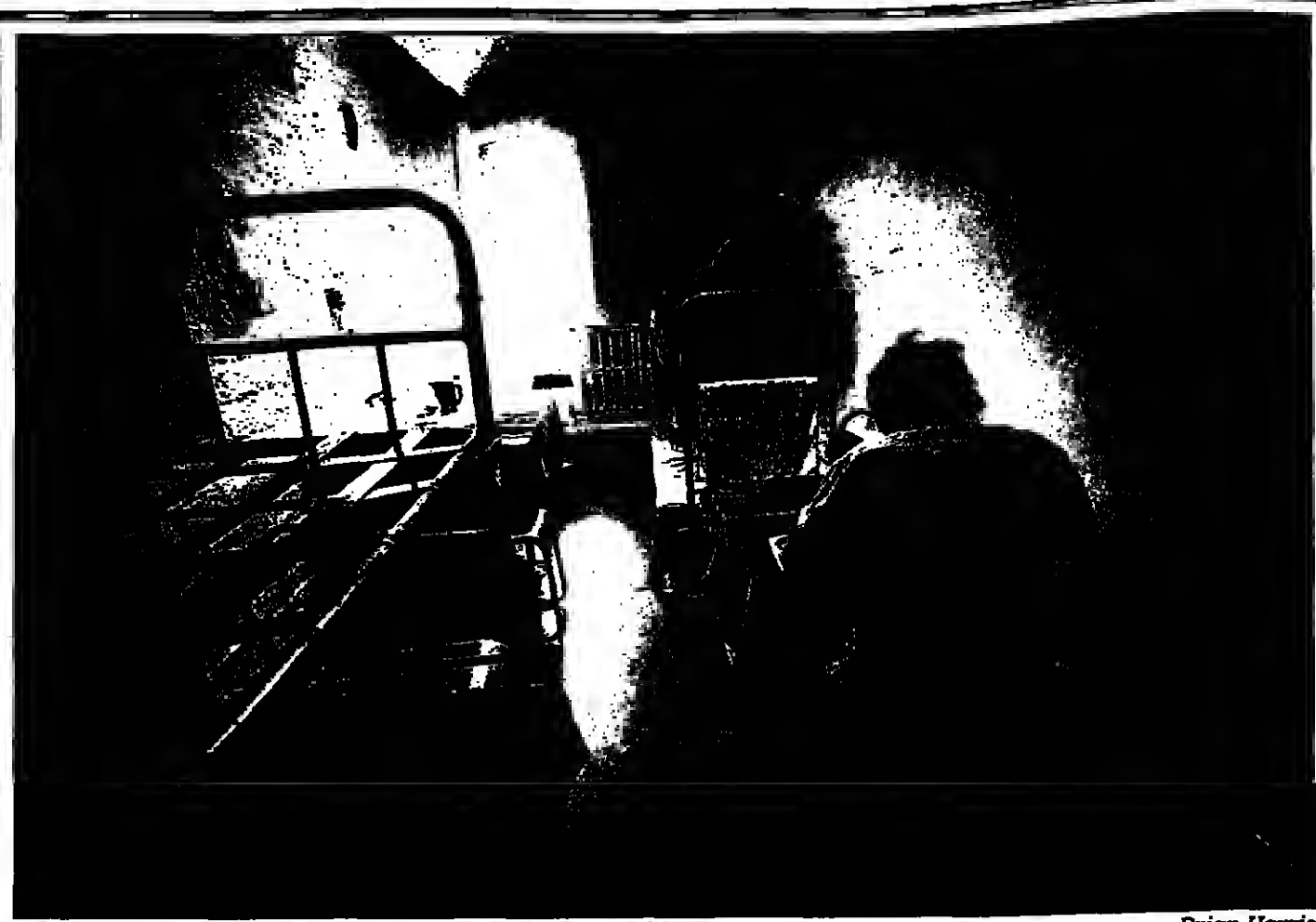
and won libel battles, commercial disputes, local government cases and employment tribunals. He acted over the years for clients who included Kevin Maxwell, the Church of Scientology and Gillian Taffarth.

In addition to his heavy caseload (as many as 56 cases in a year), Beloff was joint head of chambers at 4-5 Gray's Inn Square. One of his tenants - brought in by Beloff some years ago on recommendation of the current Lord Chancellor - happens to be the Prime Minister's wife, Cherie Booth QC. "Lord Irvine rang me 10 years ago about this young lady barrister," he remembers. "He said, 'she's frightfully able, would you look at her?' I was mesmerised because, without being extraordinarily vain, she was positive about her qualities, and that's difficult to bring off."

But with all this on his hands, Beloff's life was not his own. "It's a



Michael Beloff: 'In one week at the Bar, I can earn as much as I could in a year at Trinity College'



A four-man cell in Hull Prison. 'Do community sentences offer better long-term protection?'

Brian Harris

## To imprison or not to imprison

CAN THE prison population be allowed to grow indefinitely? Do community sentences work? If not, how can they be made credible alternatives to jail? These three questions dominated the deliberations of the Commons Home Affairs Committee, whose Report was released last week. The chairman, Chris Mullin MP, and his colleagues have produced a surprisingly tough-minded document. Their major concern is the exponential rise in the prison population. In the last five years there has been an increase of more than 50 per cent. There are 65,000 in prison now, with a forecast of a total of over 82,000 in seven years' time. At £24,271 per place, this would produce an annual bill from the year 2005 of £2bn. Faced with this, the members of the committee have produced a down-to-earth report, packed with common sense. It is a pity that one crucial question - which offenders should not be imprisoned at all? - is left unanswered.

Protection of the public, they say, must be one of the principal objectives of any sentencing policy. This is easily achieved for the term of a sentence of

### OUR LEARNED FRIEND



PATRICK CURRAN QC

imprisonment, but do community sentences offer better long-term protection by weaning offenders away from their criminal lifestyles? The frustrating truth, which the committee openly acknowledges in answer, is that there is "an absence of rigorous assessment into the effectiveness of individual community sentences at present". Such sentencing will thus continue to be a matter of guesswork and optimism.

Probation officers are praised for their dedication, but there is a sharp reminder to them in the Report that they represent the public, not the criminal. The use of the word "client" by some to

describe their charges is criticised.

The committee grasps the nettle when it comes to public perception of community sentences. The public and the criminal regard them as a let-off. So, strict enforcement is vital. Creation of a new offence of breach of a community sentence is recommended, carrying a prison sentence.

There is a welcome recommendation on the use of suspended sentences. The power of a judge to suspend a sentence was restricted by Parliament in 1991 to be used only in "exceptional circumstances". Conscientious application of the law by the courts resulted in many offenders being sent to prison who would previously have been given suspended sentences. The committee's recommendation to the Government to allow more frequent use of the power may help the court to do justice again in many an individual case, to the incidental advantage of the tax-paying public.

In most respects the report is sharply focused, but there are some vague passages: "We suggest that many people currently imprisoned could be

dealt with more effectively by a non-custodial sentence". Who are these people, and what offences have they committed? A prison sentence is only imposed for an offence which is "so serious that only a custodial sentence is justified for it". The judge is required by law to give reasons (and judges take scrupulous care over this).

Perhaps the way forward is to encourage a greater openness in debating the way in which a non-custodial sentencing policy may develop. Almost everyone would agree that immediate custody is the only way of dealing with persons convicted of murder, rape, armed robbery and kidnapping. What then, of burglary? At present, the policy of the court is clear: an immediate custodial sentence is almost inevitable. Other examples of the current categories in which immediate imprisonment is imposed are suppliers of hard drugs, street muggers, child molesters and swindlers who prey on the elderly. At the moment it is left to the judges to do the best they can to reflect the view of society.

Patrick Curran QC is a barrister at 9-12 Bell Yard

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Sole Applicant. Authorised Signatory for the Applicant.

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**Application for Licence Exemption by The Vale of Glamorgan Railway Company Limited ("The Applicant")**

Company Registration Number: 1359788

Principal address of the applicant: Barry Island Station, Barry Island, Vale of Glamorgan CF62 5TH

Directors of the Applicant:  
David Jeffrey Morgan  
New Robert William Apin Jones  
Samuel Stuart Bailey  
Haydn Shadbolt  
John Francis Wake  
James Howe  
Leonard Rees

Proposed Licence Holders:  
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Robert Underwood  
Christopher James Perkins  
John Hayes

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Ms Assia Diana, Licensing and Compliance  
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not later than 16 October 1998

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Dated 18 September 1998  
John Swift QC

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S. J. WALMSLEY, Liquidator

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GERALD BROWN OF HENRI & COMPANY, 75 COLLEGE STREET, SUTTON COLDFIELD B77 1ST give notice pursuant to Rule 4.105 that on 7 September 1998 I was appointed Liquidator of the above company by the court and I am now acting as Liquidator of the company's affairs and I am calling on the creditors of the company to submit their claims to me by the date of the next meeting of the creditors of the company on 15 September 1998.

A NEWSPAPER for that special date, 1940-1998, most titles available. Ideal birthday gift. Remember when the first was 1000. Or CALL FREE 0800 520 000.

**Legal Notices**

**THE INCLOSURE ACT 1986**

**STANISLAW LIMITED (in Liquidation)**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I, Stephen James Walmsley of Poppleton & Appleby, 32 High Street, Manchester, M4 1QD was appointed liquidator of the above named Company by the Masters and Confirmed on 18 September 1998.

S. J. WALMSLEY, Liquidator

**Legal Notices**

**THE INCLOSURE ACT 1986**

**RE: CABLEWAYS LIMITED**

GERALD BROWN OF HENRI & COMPANY, 75 COLLEGE STREET, SUTTON COLDFIELD B77 1ST give notice pursuant to Rule 4.105 that on 7 September 1998 I was appointed Liquidator of the above company by the court and I am now acting as Liquidator of the company's affairs and I am calling on the creditors of the company to submit their claims to me by the date of the next meeting of the creditors of the company on 15 September 1998.

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NEW FILMS

**CHARACTER (15)**  
Director: Mike van Diem  
Starring: Jan Dekker, Fredja van Huet (subtitles)  
This intelligent but uneven drama about betrayal and revenge won this year's Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. The picture is over as gripping as it should have been, though the foreboding Gothic gloom sits nicely with the grotesque compositions.  
West End: Curzon Mayfair

**THE DOOM GENERATION (18)**  
Director: Gregg Araki  
Starring: James Duval, Rose McGowan  
Gregg Araki's gory, tongue-in-cheek rock movie about a couple who hit the road with a psychotic friend is fun for the first half-hour, deadening for the rest.  
West End: ABC Piccadilly

**KISSING A FOOL (15)**  
Director: Doug Elton  
Starring: David Schwimmer, Jason Lee, Mili Avital  
David Schwimmer (Ross in *Friends*) plays a television sportscastrator who falls in love with his best friend's editor (Mili Avital). But insecurity intrudes on their wedding plans and the groom-to-be feels compelled to test his love's loyalty.  
West End: Virgin Trocadero

**LETHAL WEAPON 4 (15)**  
Director: Richard Donner  
Starring: Mel Gibson, Danny Glover, Joe Pesci, Rene Russo, Chris Rock  
The poster copy for this latest instalment of the ingratiating comedy-thriller series says it all: "The action you expect; the faces you love." This time, Detectives Riggs (Mel Gibson) and Murtaugh (Danny Glover) are up against Triads in the counterfeiting trade, but a more pressing issue is their own middle-age. The screenplay acknowledges that this pair are not as nimble as they used to be, and makes room for a ripe new comic talent, the young actor Chris Rock.  
West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Rd, Clapham Picture House, Elephant &

**Castle Coronet, Hammersmith, Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End**

**LOVE IS THE DEVIL (18)**  
Director: John Maybury  
Starring: Derek Jacobi, Daniel Craig, Tilda Swinton  
Derek Jacobi gives a ferocious performance as Francis Bacon in this first feature from the acclaimed and adventurous experimental filmmaker John Maybury. Among the film's many technical accomplishments are the blurred, twisted and grotesque visual compositions which strongly evoke the artist's work.  
West End: Barbican Screen, Chelsea Cinema, Gate Notting Hill, Metro, Phoenix Cinema, Renoir, Richmond Picturehouse, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Hill

**MEN WITH GUNS (HOMBRES ARMADOS) (15)**  
Director: John Sayles  
Starring: Federico Luppi, Damian Delgado, Tania Cruz (subtitles)  
John Sayles follows his biggest success (*Love Story*) with this conscientious drama about a doctor who discovers that each of his previous students has met with a grisly end in an unspecified Latin American country. Sayles aims some intriguing ideas, but he seems consistently unable to animate any of them.  
West End: Metro, Rio Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road

**PEPÉ LE MOKO (15)**  
Director: Jean Gabin  
Starring: Jean Gabin, Mireille Batain (subtitles)  
Long-overdue revival of this tender thriller, with Jean Gabin as the underworld hero proving the kashbah. There are shades here of what would flourish into film noir, but the driving force is the characters' need to escape, whether it is Algiers or simply the past from which they are fleeing.  
West End: National Film Theatre

**Ryan Gilbey**

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS



**Film Ryan Gilbey**  
INSOMNIACS OF the world unite. Starting this evening at London's wonderfully seamy Prince Charles cinema is the wonderful 48-hour movie marathon bringing together surprise previews and cult favourites. I'm not suggesting that you stay for the whole thing - surely watching *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* at 7 on Sunday morning (or any other time of the day or night for that matter) is nobody's idea of a good time. But there are treats here that you might like to find time to dip into, should they correspond with your weekend schedule. Opening proceedings tonight is a preview of the gritty, acclaimed directorial debut by Vincent Gallo (above), *Buffalo 66*. Then the bill disappears into the wee small hours with a handful of splendid science-fiction, including Bruce Dern in the pensive *Silent Running*, not to mention John Carpenter's splendid stoned comedy *Dark Star*, which should put old *Red Dwarf* fans firmly in their place. That takes us up to Saturday morning, when a brief interval will allow time for breakfast. Details on the Saturday/Sunday bill tomorrow. Prince Charles Cinema, London WC2 (0171-4671 8181) tonight, 8.30pm

Comedy James Rampton



BRITAIN'S most successful comic poet, John Hegley (right), is touchingly evangelical about his art. "Poetry is a natural part of our lives, but for some reason we've become alienated from it. It's in those lovely phrases like 'pleased as punch', or 'wide awake', or 'a lick of paint' - that's beautiful poetry because the brush is like a tongue. Poetry is everybody's." Drowse yourself in verse when Hegley appears on a splendid bill, alongside the perpetually caustic Jeremy Hardy and the talented Meera Syal from *Goodness Gracious Me*, in a benefit for the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary. *Hackney Empire, London E8 (0181-985 2424) Sun 7.30pm*. There is a rare live appearance by the deliciously cheeky Graham Norton, if you fancy your stand-up camper than a row of tents. *Bound & Gagged Palmers Green, London N13 (0171-483 3456) tonight and tomorrow, 9.15pm*

Theatre Dominic Cavendish



MICHAEL Frayn's collection of eight plays, *Alarms and Excursions* (right), takes a light-hearted look at our helplessness in the age of creature-comforts technology. It's a mixed bag, but director Michael Blakemore gets his dependable team (Josie Lawrence, Robert Bathurst, Nicky Katt and Felicity Kendal) to hit an agreeable number of comic buttons. *Gielgud Theatre, London W1 (0171-494 5065) 7.45pm*. The *Steam Industry* do more than justice to Rodney Ackland's speedy adaptation of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, neglected since 1946, with a cast of 18 huddling into a space even sardines would balk at. *Mark Colston shines through the gloom as a feverish Raskolnikov. Finborough Theatre, London SW10 (0171-373 3842) 8pm*

Pop Tim Perry



A FEW TICKETS remain for the second Royal Albert Hall show by The Mavericks (right). Judging by the response at Wednesday night's gig, there'll be a fair few returning for a second dose of this contagious mix of all-American popular musical styles, ranging from ragtime to mariachi. They're a band on top form and their two-hour set is perked up by the Havana Horns brass section. Much better live than on (platinum-selling) record. *Radio 2 has never sounded this much fun. Royal Albert Hall, London SW7 (0171-589 8212) 7.30pm*. Another bunch of musical mavericks are Scottish pioneers The Delgados, who mix up feedback, fuzz, ethereal folk sounds and great pop. Until now, they've been overshadowed by some of their compatriots, such as Mogwai and Arab Strap, but there's been a growing respect for their current album, *Peloton*, and the new "The Weaker Argument Defeats the Stronger" single. *Morrisons, Belfast (01232 324924) tonight; The Works, Aberdeen (01224 648000) tomorrow*

GENERAL RELEASE

**ARMAGEDDON (12)**  
This deeply stupid film purports to be a tender love story, a meaty action adventure and a global disaster movie in which a meteor is on a collision course with Earth. *West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

**THE AVENGERS (12)**  
Ralph Fiennes does the bowler hat as Steed, Una Thurman pours herself into a catsuit as Emma Peel, while Sean Connery plans to take over the world by controlling the weather. *West End: Warner Village West End*

**BABYMOOTHER (15)**  
An endearing reggae musical which takes an old idea and douses it in gaudy colours. The film focuses on Anita (Anjela Lauren Smith), a "baby-mother" who longs to be a reggae star but is hampered by her responsibility to her son and daughter. *West End: Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero*

**LE BOSSU (15)**  
This sumptuous swashbuckler doesn't break much new ground, but is acted and shot with magnificent bravado. *West End: ABC Swiss Centre, Curzon Mtnema*

**COUSIN BETTE (15)**  
Balzac's novel about romance and deception is the basis for this shallow but breezy comedy. Jessica Lange plays Bette, the housekeeper who inadvertently weaves a web of betrayal around everyone she knows. *West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage*

**THE DAYTRIPPERS (15)**  
Worried that her husband (Stanley Tucci) may be having an affair, Eliza (Hope Davis) confides in her parents, only to find the whole family accompanying her to Manhattan confront him. *West End: ABC Swiss Centre, Rio Cinema*

**DR DOLITTLE (PG)**  
Dr Dolittle proves that Eddie Murphy's talents are surprisingly pliable within the constraints of a PG certificate. *West End: Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

**EVE'S BAYOU (15)**  
Rites-of-passage drama that feels for the most part like reheated *West End: Fried Green Tomatoes, Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Trocadero*

**HE GOT GAME (18)**  
Denzel Washington plays a man doing time for the murder of his wife who is offered a deal which could cut short his sentence if he can persuade his basketball star son to sign up with the Governor's alma mater. Spike Lee coaxes an impressive performance from Washington but it is his own stylistic excesses which are the film's undoing. *West End: Clapham Picture House, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero*

**GANG RELATED (15)**  
A new thriller which gives a few welcome twists to the formulaic routine of drive-by shootings and jive-talking homeboys. James Belushi is spectacularly sleazy. *West End: Virgin Trocadero*

**GODZILLA (PG)**  
The team which cooked up *Stargate* and *Independence Day* is generally very adept at constructing enjoyable adventures. Unfortunately, on this occasion, their tight touch has deserted them. *West End: Empire Leicester Square*

**THE HORSE WHISPERER (PG)**  
Robert Redford's film of Nicholas Evans' novel is a textbook lesson in the narcissistic allure of cinema. Redford plays a Montana farmer who specialises in equine psychology and who agrees to help Kristin Scott Thomas whose daughter has been traumatised in a riding accident. *Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Screen on the Boulevard, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero*

**er Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road**

**THE LAND GIRLS (12)**  
Rachel Weiss, Anna Friel and Catherine McCormack are the "land girls" called upon in WWII to pick up the discarded ploughs. Nothing surprising here - sexual awakening, broad laughs, a smattering of tragedy - but very nicely done. *West End: Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket, Warner Village West End*

**THE LAST DAYS OF DISCO (15)**  
Whit Stillman does a fine job of capturing the mixture of flair, ingenuity and uncertainty by which any burgeoning trend is characterised and it's refreshing to find a work that is this enchanting and intelligent. *West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Panton Street, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Haymarket, Warner Village West End*

**LOCK, STOCK & TWO SMOKING BARRELS (18)**  
Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels follows the lead of Quentin Tarantino but the film's defining characteristic is its resilient morality. The picture is peopled by thugs, both amateur and professional. Young Eddy, who comes unstuck in a high stakes card-game, falls into the former; but Hatches Harry, to whom he owes £500,000, is a dangerous old-school pro. *West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

**SAVING PRIVATE RYAN (15)**  
In Spielberg's Second World War drama, Captain John Miller (Tom Hanks) is dispatched with his squad on a compassionate mission to seek out a young private behind enemy lines and return him home to safety. It is unlikely that many viewers will emerge from the picture warmed by emotional catharsis - it is the harsh, devastating battle sequences which are branded on the memory. *West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Hammersmith Virgin, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker Street, Screen on the Green, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero*

**THE SPANISH PRISONER (PG)**  
David Mamet's intricate thriller is a playful exercise in twisting a plot until it locks; there is a scientific detachment about the way he explores every permutation of his Kafkaesque scenario, though the movie is also slyly funny. *West End: Clapham Picture House, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket, Warner Village West End*

**SPECIES II (18)**  
Ludicrous science-fiction horror about a strand of alien DNA carried back to earth in the bodies of astronauts. *West End: Plaza, Virgin Trocadero*

**LA VIE DE JESUS (THE LIFE OF JESUS) (NC)**  
Bruno Dumont's brilliant debut feature is set in a desolate, lifeless town in northern France where a group of twentysomething friends rattle around on their motorbikes. *West End: ICA Cinema*

**THE WEDDING SINGER (12)**  
Unashamedly dumb but very winning comedy about a romantic singer (Adam Sandler) who falls in love with a waitress (Drew Barrymore), only to find she's already engaged to someone else. *West End: Odeon Mezzanine*

**THE X-FILES (18)**  
Duchovny and Anderson engagingly reprise their roles as FBI agents Mulder and Scully in their first big-screen outing. The two leads are most engaging, conveying great tenderness through little dialogues and even less facial movement. *West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Screen on the Boulevard, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero*

CINEMA

**WEST END**

**ABC BAKER STREET**  
(0870-9020418) @ Baker Street  
The Last Days of Disco 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 2.20pm, 5.00pm, 8.10pm

**ABC PANTON STREET**  
(0870-9020404) @ Piccadilly Circus  
The Big Lebowski 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm  
Jackie Brown 1.30pm, 4.00pm, 7.45pm  
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6pm, 8.25pm  
Live Flesh 1.40pm, 4pm, 6.25pm, 8.40pm

**ABC PICCADILLY**  
(0171-287 4322 from 1pm) @ Piccadilly Circus  
The Doom Generation 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm  
Lolita 3.10pm, 8pm  
And Death on Long Island 1.05pm, 6pm

**ABC SHAFTESBURY AVENUE**  
(0870-9020402) @ Leicester Square  
Tottenham Court Road 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.50pm  
The X-Files 12.50pm, 3.20pm, 8.25pm

**ABC SWISS CENTRE**  
(0870-9020403) @ Leicester Square  
Piccadilly Circus Le Bossu 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm  
The Daytrippers 1.10pm, 3.10pm, 5.10pm, 7.10pm, 9.10pm  
Deconstructing Harry 6.10pm, 8.40pm  
Gojo Dilo 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 5.10pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm

**ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD**  
(0870-9020414) @ Tottenham Court Road  
Lethal Weapon 4 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm  
Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.25pm  
Saving Private Ryan 1.05pm, 4.40pm, 8.20pm

**BARBICAN SCREEN**  
(0171-658 8891) @ Moorgate/Barbican  
Saver Private Ryan 1.15pm, 4.40pm, 8.40pm  
Saving Private Ryan 5pm, 8.15pm

**CHELSEA CINEMA**  
(0171-351 3742) @ Sloane Square  
Love Is the Devil 1pm, 2.55pm, 4.55pm, 6.55pm, 9pm

**CLAPHAM PICTURE HOUSE**  
(0171-498 3233) @ Clapham Common  
He Got Game 4pm, 9pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 1pm, 3.45pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm  
Saving Private Ryan 1.30pm, 4.45pm, 8.15pm  
The Spanish Prisoner 1.15pm, 6.40pm

**CURZON MAYFAIR**  
(0171-369 1720) @ Green Park  
Character (Karaoke) 12.15pm, 2.45pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm

**ELEPHANT & CASTLE CORONET**  
(0171-703 4968) @ Elephant & Castle  
Lethal Weapon 4 3pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.35pm  
Saving Private Ryan 4.05pm, 7.40pm

**EMPIRE LEICESTER SQUARE**  
(0990-888990) @ Leicester Square  
Baby-mother 3.45pm, 5.35pm, 8.05pm  
888995 for details  
Godzilla 2pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm, 11.30pm  
Saving Private Ryan 12noon, 4pm, 9pm, 11.50pm

**GATE NOTTING HILL**  
(0171-727 4043) @ Notting Hill  
Gate Love Is the Devil 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 9.05pm, 11.15pm (+Short: The Queen's Monastery)

**HAMMERSMITH VIRGIN**  
(0870-9070718) @ Ravenscourt Park/Hammersmith  
The Horse Whisperer 1.20pm, 4.50pm, 8.15pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm  
Two Smoking Barrels 12.40pm, 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm  
Saving Private Ryan 12.20pm, 4.20pm, 8pm

**ICA CINEMA**  
(0171-930 3647) @ Charing Cross  
The Hip 6.30pm, 8.30pm  
La Vie De Jesus 5pm, 7pm, 9pm

**METRO**  
(0171-734 1506) @ Piccadilly Circus  
Crucifixer Square Love Is the Devil 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm  
Men With Guns 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

**CURZON MINEMA**  
(0171-369 1723) @ Knightsbridge  
Le Bossu 3.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm

**NOTTING HILL CORONET**  
(0171-727 6705) @ Notting Hill  
Gate Saving Private Ryan 1.15pm, 4.35pm, 8pm

**ODEON CAMDEN TOWN**  
(0181-315 4229) @ Camden Town  
Cousin Bette 6.15pm  
The Last Days of Disco 12.45pm, 3.25pm, 6pm, 8.50pm, 11.45pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 12noon, 2.50pm, 5.45pm, 8.35pm, 11.30pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 12.40pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 9.05pm, 11.30pm  
Saving Private Ryan 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 7.45pm, 11.15pm  
The X-Files 12.15pm, 3pm, 5.55pm, 8.40pm, 11.20pm

**ODEON HAYMARKET**  
(0181-315 4212) @ Piccadilly Circus  
Cousin Bette 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

**ODEON KENSINGTON**  
(0181-315 4214) @ High Street  
Kensington Armageddon 11.30pm  
Cousin Bette 7pm  
The Last Days of Disco 12.35pm, 4.15pm, 7.10pm  
The Horse Whisperer 1.40pm, 5.05pm, 8.25pm  
The Last Days of Disco 1.20pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.55pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 9pm  
The Little Mermaid 1.30pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 2pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.25pm  
Saving Private Ryan 1.05pm, 3.40pm, 4.45pm, 7.50pm, 8.55pm  
The X-Files 9.10pm

**ODEON LEICESTER SQUARE**  
(0181-315 4215) @ Leicester Square  
The Horse Whisperer 1.25pm, 4.15pm, 7.50pm

**ODEON MARBLE ARCH**  
(0181-315 4216) @ Marble Arch  
Armageddon 1.55pm, 5.15pm, 8.45pm, 12.05pm  
The Horse Whisperer 1.35pm, 5.10pm, 8.45pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 12.15pm, 3.10pm, 6.05pm, 9pm, 11.55pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 12.55pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.55pm  
Saving Private Ryan 1.15pm, 5.05pm, 8.40pm, 12.15pm

**ODEON MEZZANINE**  
(0181-315 4215) @ Leicester Square  
Eve's Bayou 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm  
The Object of My Affection 1.35pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm  
Six Days, Seven Nights 1.55pm, 4pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm  
Titanic 12.05pm, 3.45pm, 7.25pm  
The Wedding Singer 2.25pm, 4.30pm, 6.40pm, 8.50pm

**ODEON SWISS COTTAGE**  
(0181-315 4216) @ Swiss Cottage  
Armageddon 2.55pm, 5pm, 8.15pm  
Cousin Bette 12.25pm, 3pm  
The Horse Whisperer 1.35pm, 4.05pm, 7.45pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 12.10pm, 2.55pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9.10pm  
Private Ryan 12.30pm, 4pm, 7.40pm  
The Spanish Prisoner 1.30pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm

**ODEON WEST END**  
(0181-315 4221) @ Leicester Square  
Whore Lost in Space 12noon, 2.50pm, 5.40pm, 8.30pm  
The X-Files Of Disco 11.25am, 1.50pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm, 9.20pm, 11.55pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 11am, 12noon, 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 11.40pm  
Mr Nice Guy 12midnight, 1am, 1.30am, 2am, 3am  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.40pm, 4pm, 7.40pm, 11.40pm  
Soream 12.10pm, 2.10pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm  
The Spanish Prisoner 1.20pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.50pm, 11.30pm

**ACTON**  
PARK ROYAL WARNER VILLAGE (0181-898 0066) @ Park Royal  
Armageddon 2.00pm, 5.15pm, 8.35pm  
Baby-mother 9.40pm, 11.35pm  
Dr Dolittle 2pm, 4pm, 6pm, 8.10pm  
Gang Related 12.30pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm  
The Horse Whisperer 2.40pm, 6.10pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 11.50am, 12.30pm, 2.50pm, 3.30pm, 5.50pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm, 9.30pm, 11.30pm, 9.15pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 12noon, 2.30pm, 5.05pm, 7.30pm, 9.55pm, 12.40am  
Saving Private Ryan 1pm, 1.50pm, 4.40pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm, 9.05pm, 11.50pm  
Species II 10.10pm, 12.20am  
The X-Files 12.40pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 9.15pm, 12.10am

**BARKING**  
ODEON (0181-507 8444) @ Barking  
Armageddon 8pm  
Dr Dolittle 12.55pm, 4.40pm, 4.30pm, 6.10pm  
Godzilla 1.05pm, 3.35pm, 6.05pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 12.15pm, 3pm, 6.30pm, 9.15pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 8.45pm  
Saving Private Ryan 12.45pm, 4.15pm, 8.45pm  
Species II 9pm  
The X-Files 12.20pm, 3.05pm, 5.50pm, 8.35pm

**SCREEN ON BAKER STREET**  
(0171-935 2722) @ Baker Street  
The Horse Whisperer 3.25pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 6.40pm, 8.55pm  
Saving Private Ryan 3pm, 7.30pm

**SCREEN ON THE HILL**  
(0171-226 3520) @ Angel Saving Private Ryan 3.30pm, 7.40pm

**SCREEN ON THE HILL**  
(0171-435 3366) @ Belsize Park  
Love Is the Devil 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9.30pm

**UCI WHITELEYS**  
(0990-888990) @ Bayswater  
Armageddon 2.30pm, 5.10pm, 8.45pm  
Dr Dolittle 1.05pm, 4.20pm, 7.10pm  
The Horse Whisperer 1.40pm, 5.05pm, 8.25pm  
The Last Days of Disco 1.20pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.55pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 3.20pm, 6.10pm, 9pm  
The Little Mermaid 1.30pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 2pm, 4.30pm, 7pm, 9.25pm  
Saving Private Ryan 1.05pm, 3.40pm, 4.45pm, 7.50pm, 8.55pm  
The X-Files 9.10pm

**VIRGIN CHELSEA**  
(0870-9070710) @ Sloane Square  
Armageddon 1.10pm  
Baby-mother 3.45pm, 5.35pm, 8.05pm, 11.50pm  
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 1.15pm, 4.40pm, 8.10pm  
The Spanish Prisoner 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm

**VIRGIN FULHAM ROAD**  
(0870-9070711) @ South Kensington  
The Horse Whisperer 1pm, 4.30pm, 8pm  
The Land Girls 1.10pm, 4.30pm, 6.30pm, 9.10pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.30pm  
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.30pm  
The Spanish Prisoner 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm

**VIRGIN TROCADERO**  
(0870-9070716) @ Piccadilly Circus  
Armageddon 1.10pm  
Baby-mother 3.45pm, 5.35pm, 8.05pm, 11.50pm  
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.30pm  
The Spanish Prisoner 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm

**WARNER VILLAGE WEST END**  
(0171-437 4343) @ Leicester Square  
Armageddon 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm, 11.50pm  
The Last Days of Disco 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.30pm  
The Spanish Prisoner 1.30pm, 3.50pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm

**WARNER VILLAGE**  
(0181-880 8090) @ East Croydon  
Armageddon 2pm, 5.20pm, 8.35pm  
Dr Dolittle 12.20pm, 2.30pm, 4.50pm  
Gang Related 2.40pm, 6.10pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 12noon, 12.30pm, 2.50pm, 3.30pm, 5.50pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm, 9.30pm, 11.55pm, 12.25pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm, 12.10am  
Saving Private Ryan 12.10pm, 1pm, 3.50pm, 4.40pm, 7.10pm, 8.20pm, 11.20pm  
Species II 9.40pm, 12midnight  
The X-Files 7pm, 9.50pm, 12.30am

**DAGENHAM**  
WARNER VILLAGE (0181-592 2020) @ Dagenham Heathway  
Armageddon 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm, 11.30pm  
Dr Dolittle 2.40pm, 4.40pm, 6.30pm  
Gang Related 12midnight  
The Horse Whisperer 2.15pm, 6pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 12.30pm, 3pm, 3.30pm, 6pm, 6.50pm, 9.35pm, 11.45pm, 12.15am  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 2.30pm, 4.25pm, 5pm, 7.15pm, 9.40pm, 12.50pm, 4.30pm, 8.20pm  
Baby-mother 11.50pm  
Species II 8.40pm, 10.50pm  
The X-Files 6.45pm, 9.20pm

**EALING**  
VIRGIN UXBIDGE ROAD (0870-9070719) @ Ealing Broadway  
Lethal Weapon 4 12.30pm, 3.10pm, 6pm, 8.50pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 2pm, 4.25pm, 7pm, 9.25pm  
Saving Private Ryan 12.20pm, 4.40pm, 8.10pm, 11.50pm, 12.20am

**EDMONTON**  
LEE VALLEY UCI 12 (0990-888990) @ Tottenham Hale  
Armageddon 1.50pm, 5.10pm, 8.30pm, 11.50pm  
Dr Dolittle 7.25pm, 9.30pm, 11.45pm  
Dr Dolittle 1.15pm, 2.20pm, 3.30pm, 4.35pm, 5.45pm, 9.20pm  
Gang Related 11.30am  
Godzilla 1.10pm, 4.15pm  
The Horse Whisperer 12.50pm, 4.30pm, 8.20pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 1pm, 3pm, 4pm, 6pm, 7pm, 9pm, 10pm, 12midnight  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 2pm, 4.40pm, 7.15pm, 9.45pm, 12.20am

**GLDERS GREEN**  
ODEON (0181-455 1724) @ Golders Green  
Saving Private Ryan 12.50pm, 4.15pm, 7.45pm

**GREENWICH**  
CINEMA (0181-293 0101) @ Greenwich  
Lethal Weapon 4 3.40pm, 6.20pm, 9pm, 11.40pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.40pm, 4.20pm, 7pm, 9.20pm, 11.40pm  
Saving Private Ryan 12.25pm, 3.55pm, 7.30pm

**HAMPSTEAD**  
ABC (0870-9020413) @ Belsize Park  
Lethal Weapon 4 1.10pm, 5.10pm, 8.10pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 2.10pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm  
Saving Private Ryan 12.25pm, 3.55pm, 7.30pm

**HARROW**  
SAFARI (0181-426 0303) @ Harrow-on-the-Hill/Harrow & Wealdstone  
Dr Se 1.30pm, 5pm, 8.45pm  
Kareeb 8.45pm


**WARNER VILLAGE (0181-427 9009)**  
@ Harrow on the Hill  
Armageddon 10.50am, 2pm, 5.10pm, 8.20pm  
Dr Dolittle 9.30am, 1.15pm, 4.25pm, 1.50pm, 5.10pm, 8.30pm, 11.30pm  
The Horse Whisperer 11.30am, 3pm, 6.30pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 9.30am, 11.30am, 11.30am, 12.20pm, 3.10pm, 5.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm, 9pm, 11.30pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 9.50am, 12.10pm, 2.35pm, 5.05pm, 7.20pm, 9.45pm, 12.30pm  
night Saving Private Ryan 9.40am, 12.40pm, 1pm, 4.10pm, 4.40pm, 7.40pm, 8pm, 11.05pm, 11.25pm  
Species II 9.50pm, 11.50pm  
The X-Files 10.45pm, 1.10am, 4pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm, 12midnight

**HOLLOWAY**  
ODEON (0181-315 4213) @ Holloway/Archway  
Armageddon 2.25pm, 6pm, 9.10pm  
Dr Dolittle 1.40pm, 3.55pm, 6.10pm, 8.10pm, 10.15pm  
He Got Game 12.55pm, 3.45pm, 6.35pm, 9.25pm  
The Horse Whisperer 2.05pm, 5.30pm, 8.55pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 1.20pm, 4.05pm, 6.50pm, 9.35pm, 12.30pm  
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 2.30pm, 4.55pm, 7.30pm, 9.55pm  
Saving Private Ryan 1.50pm, 5.25pm, 8.50pm  
The X-Files 2pm, 4.55pm, 7.10pm, 9.40pm

**ILFORD**  
ODEON (0181-315 4223) @ Gants Hill  
Barney's Great Adventure 12.55pm  
Dr Dolittle 1.10pm, 3.10pm, 5.10pm  
The Horse Whisperer 7.30pm  
Lethal Weapon 4 1.40pm, 5.15



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